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Is it time to change the locks?

The odd cast that holds keys to the city. Page 6

THE RAW ENERGY OF DANCE

The new Harbourfront Centre show vox:lumen, from lights to music, is quite literally a self-powered statement about sustainability. **Story, page 8.** COURTESY DAVID HOU

Union hopeful York U strike will be short

Labour. But CUPE says U of T administration has not indicated any desire to return to the bargaining table

GILBERT NGABO
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"Encouraged" and "happy" are the words being used by the union at the centre of a strike at one of the city's universities.

CUPE, which represents 3,700 teaching assistants and contract faculty on strike at York University, is hopeful a deal can be reached soon.

"We've been encouraged by the university's response in the media that they are open and willing to come back to the bargaining table," said Faiz Ahmed, chair of CUPE 3903. "They are the ones who took the lead, and we are really happy about that."

York cancelled all classes starting Tuesday, after members of the union voted down a deal attempting to improve wages. However, campus facilities such as libraries, computer labs, cafeterias, athletic facilities and offices have remained open.

York president Mamdouh Shoukri said in a statement that the institution was working to return to normal operations as quickly as possible, and Ahmed said it is hoped that both sides will talk to a provincial mediator on Thursday in an effort to come back to the bargaining table.

Picket lines were up again on Wednesday at both Keele and Glendon campuses.

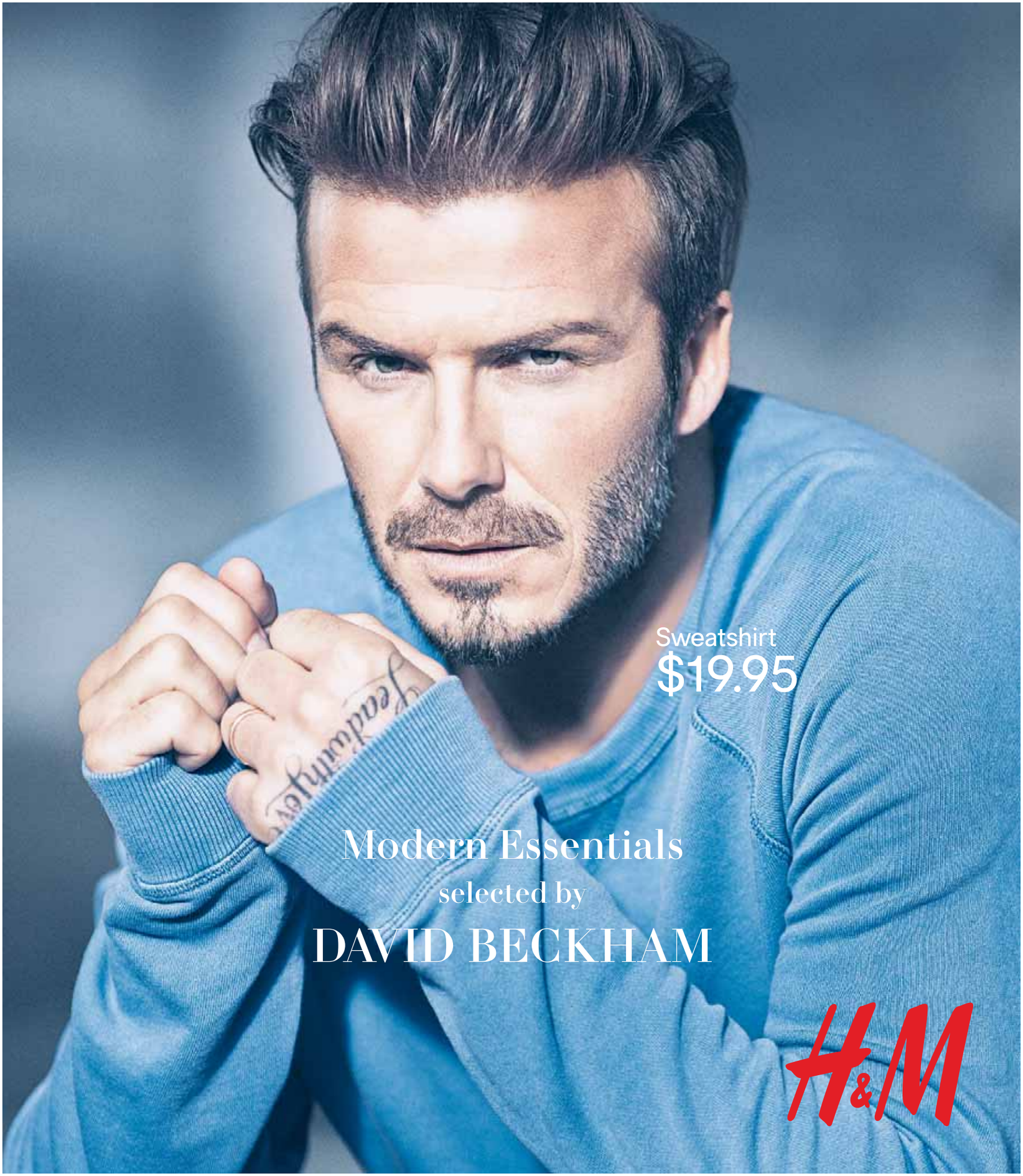
They were up at the University of Toronto for the third consecutive day as well, where about 6,000 teachers assistants walked off their jobs and took to the street Monday.

The union has reached out to the administration to express willingness to return to the bargaining table, said Erin Black, chair of CUPE 3902.

"The employer has indicated that they have no desire to return to the table," she said. "There are no negotiations right now nor do we know when they resume, because the university administration is not willing to meet with us. It makes us very frustrated."

Ontario Federation of Labour president Sid Ryan. will visit the picket lines on Thursday. In a statement, Ryan said: "This strike has exposed the ugly truth that a prestigious institution, like the University of Toronto, has premised its entire operation on the exploitation of precarious workers."

For more coverage, see page 10.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Fashion judge's view of sartorial stickup suspect

Crime. 'Well-dressed bandit' case has gone cold

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
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He's armed, dangerous and well-dressed.

A suspect responsible for four armed robberies committed last fall was dubbed the "well-dressed bandit" by the Toronto Police Service because he robbed two of the banks looking like a man who'd "just left a job interview," said Staff Insp. Mike Earl, at a press conference Wednesday.

The Canadian Bankers Association announced it is offering a $10,000 reward for information leading to his conviction.

The reward is being offered now because the suspect hasn't robbed a bank since November and the investigative trail has gone cold, said Earl.

Earl said that fact, and the suspect's outfit, may offer clues to who the man is: He could have lost his job and robbed banks between job interviews.

"It could be he was down and out and committing this string of robberies got him through whatever he needed to get through, before he moved on in his life," said Earl.

This bank robber is especially concerning to police because he showed his gun to the tellers, so police know he's really armed — unlike many suspects who pass a threatening note to the teller but aren't actually carrying a gun.

Anyone with information should call 911 or Crime Stoppers, but not approach him.

Look at that flash. Surveillance cameras captured this image of the dapper man Toronto police are looking to arrest.
COURTESY TORONTO POLICE

Crook look critique

Christine Loureiro, editor-in-chief of The Kit, evaluated the style of the well-dressed bandit.

"Whoever dubbed him the well-dressed bandit knew what they were talking about," she said. "If this was a man I saw on the street, I'd say he looks warm and well put-together."

The jacket: Looks like waxed cotton in the style of the high-end English brand Barbour, but doesn't appear to be one of Barbour's current styles, noted Loureiro. "It fits him well, which is exceptional."

The briefcase: His folio is so distinctive it could be something people recognize, Loureiro said. It's not an item most people would carry and would likely be owned by a banker or lawyer, she said.

"Not to poke fun of the seriousness of what he's doing — because I read he may have a gun in his folio — but this is a really beautiful folio," she said.

The tie: It looks like it could be silk, Loureiro said; it's beautifully knotted and paired with his white shirt.

The shades: Are "in the style of Ray-Ban," she said, but it's not possible to tell if they're the real deal.

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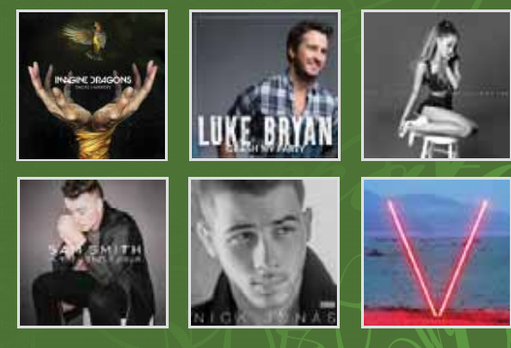

*No Purchase Necessary. See in store for complete contest rules. Correct answer to skill testing required. Number of prizes available to be won and applicable odds of winning a prize will diminish as prizes are claimed. Contest closes May 17, 2015 or while supplies last.

Mississauga favouring medical marijuana

New bylaw. A licence to produce pot for medical use will cost $250

Mississauga is set to become the first city in Canada to license and regulate the production of medical marijuana.

"The federal government legalized these operations, but we're the ones eventually responsible for where they're located and the enforcement of them," said Councillor Jim Tovey after a committee vote on a new bylaw that passed Wednesday.

Final approval is expected to come from full council by the end of March.

A staff report dated Feb. 18, 2015, indicated that no other city in Canada has made such a move, following the federal government's transition in 2013 and 2014 to license the private production of legal medical marijuana.

The report states that a Mississauga bylaw will guarantee that private medical marijuana production in the city will conform to building, fire and safety codes. Once the bylaw is in place, inspectors will legally be able to enter facilities to make sure all regulations are being followed.

"And it allows us to determine where they are located. Obviously you don't want these in residential areas or near schools," Tovey said. "Through the bylaw we will be able to enforce zoning for medical marijuana production in manufacturing and industrial zones."

Tovey said a raft of problems could arise if producers started work in the city without a proper regulatory regime in place.

"Just look at what happens with illegal grow-ops. You have everything from safety issues to what the product is actually being used for. This by-law will make sure federal regulations are being met."

The report states that two facilities have already received zoning approval, subject to a number of conditions.

They are not up and running yet as they do not have the required licences from Health Canada.

Two other facilities that city official know of have been told to cease "non-permitted use" until they obtain the required zoning.

An original licence will cost $250, with a recommended annual renewal fee of $200.

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The collision as captured in a video uploaded to Facebook. XRIS KUKIEL/FACEBOOK

TTC. 'Ghost bus' caught on video crashing into truck near Bathurst Station

LUKE SIMCOE
luke.simcoe@metronews.ca

A TTC bus with no driver on board stunned onlookers Tuesday night by leaving its parking spot at Bathurst Station and crashing into a nearby truck.

Video of the incident was captured by Xris Kukiel and uploaded to Facebook, where users quickly dubbed the empty vehicle a "ghost bus."

The 30-second clip shows a TTC bus with its doors open slowly colliding with a supply truck.

A few waiting passengers can be heard shouting "no" as the bus lurches into the second vehicle.

"And that's what happens when you don't drive the bus," Kukiel jokes.

TTC spokesman Brad Ross said the driver had gotten off the bus to use the facilities. He left the vehicle idling, which is standard procedure, but may not have applied the parking brake.

According to Ross, it's standard procedure for drivers to leave vehicles idling. The policy has not resulted in any safety issues, he said, nor has anyone ever taken an unattended bus for a joyride.

"The TTC remains one of the safest transit systems in the world and it is very, very rare that something like this happens," Ross added.

Minor damage was done to the bus.

The TTC is investigating but would not say if the driver will be disciplined.

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Should Drake get the keys to the 6?

City honour. Fan's petition, and at least one councillor, says yes

Let's give Drake a key to the city, says one Drizzy fan. After all: YOLO.

Taylor Scollon, founder of the Line Six shuttle project in Liberty Village (the company was named after a Drake lyric), is circulating a petition asking Mayor John Tory to offer the city's most famous rapper a ceremonial key to Toronto.

"If you look at people who are promoting Toronto around the world right now, I can't think of anyone who does that more and who does that to a bigger audience than Drake does," Scollon said.

To date, about 750 people have signed the online petition. Scollon plans to leave the site (getpointb.com/visitors/drake-keys) up until mid-month and then print out the signatures and bring them to city hall.

"Half of it is just my desire to meet Drake one day, to be honest," he said.

There's a precedent for giving keys to entertainers in Toronto. Since amalgamation, ceremonial keys have been handed out to everyone from NASCAR drivers to Jackie Chan. The vast majority of keys were handed out by former mayor Mel Lastman. He even gave one to Nickelback in 2003.

"That's pretty lame. Aren't they from Alberta?" Scollon said.

The choice to give someone a key to Toronto rests solely with the mayor. Tory's office did not return a request for comment, but Coun. Josh Matlow — whose Ward 22 includes Drake's childhood home in Forest Hill — is 100 per cent behind the idea.

"Whether he's putting Toronto into his albums or helping rebrand the Raptors, Drake is letting everyone know that Toronto is on the scene," Matlow said. "He's one of the city's greatest ambassadors."

LUKE SIMCOE/ METRO

Quoted

" I think we should be giving the key to the city to people who are proud to be Torontonian and who make it possible for people in Toronto to be proud of being from Toronto."

Taylor Scollon, who launched the petition to give Drake the key to the city

GETTY IMAGES FILE

MAKES SENSE

NELSON MANDELA

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 1998)
Just try to disagree. We dare you.

THE DALAI LAMA

(Mayor David Miller, 2010)
This guy's at least as well known as Drake, right?

MARGARET ATWOOD

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 2001)
Doug Ford may not have recognized her, but Mel Lastman did.

ED MIRVISH

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 1998)
We'd trust the legendary philanthropist and theatre impresario with the key to the city. He's honest.

FAMOUS

SYLVESTER STALLONE

(Mel Lastman, 2001)
The actor has filmed a lot here. And he's Rocky. So sure.

CELINE DION

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 1999)
We're guessing Mel lost a bet with the mayor of Montreal.

NICKELBACK

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 2003)
Chad Kroeger having access to city hall at night is how you remind me to change the locks.

MICKEY MOUSE

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 1999)
This animated Disney star remains the only fictional character to receive a key to the city. Hot dog!

WHAT?

GEORGE CHUVALO

(Mayor Rob Ford, 2013)
Ford gave the boxer the key to the city in March 2013, honouring him for his work counselling youth against drug use. Oh, the irony.

GEORGE COHON

(Mayor Rob Ford, 2012)
Ford may have been a KFC man at heart, but he gave his first key to the city to the founder of McDonald's Canada.

NOT FAMOUS

THE PEOPLE OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

(Mayor Mel Lastman, 2003)
Like, all of them? Perhaps he needed an alternate army to call in.

Toronto's had a loose grip on keys to the city

Since amalgamation in 1998, 57 keys to Toronto have been given out to roughly 145,000 people, if you count the entire population of Prince Edward Island (thanks, Mel Lastman). Metro takes a look at a few of the more strange and wonderful choices.

3

Number of keys to the city given by former mayor Rob Ford.

2

Number of keys to the city given by former mayor David Miller.

52

Number of keys to the city given by former mayor Mel Lastman.

- The tradition of giving someone a key to the city dates back to medieval times, when cities had walls and gates.
- Today, it has become a purely symbolic gesture; the keys don't actually unlock anything.

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Shedding light on the power of dance

Harbourfront Centre. New 'self-powered' production relies on dancers and audience to generate electricity

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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The power of dance is no longer metaphorical.

All of the energy required to stage the show was generated by dancers and the audience alike at the premiere of a new dance performance at the Harbourfront Centre Wednesday night.

"The concept of vox:lumen is an entirely self-powered production," said choreographer William Yong of Toronto's Zata Omm Dance Projects.

All of the lights, music, technology and sounds run on electricity entirely generated by people: a dramatic statement on energy, sustainability and art.

"This is a huge experiment. I don't think anybody else has done it at this kind of scale in performing arts," Yong said.

The performance is a result of design and technology collaborations with York University and Aesthetec Studio and was produced with Harbourfront Centre's World Stage.

Yong said the name translates to voice light, answering the question: "How do we see light in our lives?"

Blended into the choreography are set pieces with various types of lighting, including LED and fibre-optic lights.

Other props offer a way to harness the energy to power that illumination.

"The dancers will have to move and pull and interact with them in order to generate electricity for the light," said Yong, who's known for using technology in dance. "Everything is really integrated with the dance and movement."

The 65-minute show was designed to require the least amount of energy possible and comes in at around nine kilowatt hours of energy, a fraction of what powers a four-person house for one day.

Before the show, the audience can help create that power by using crank generators or riding a stationary bike as part of an energy fair featuring renewable energy technologies.

Performers show their energy as they get ready for vox:lumen, the environmentally-friendly show at the Harbourfront Centre. COURTESY OF DAVID HOU

"To me, vox:lumen is really about adaptability, it's about resilience, it's about sustainability, it's about responsibility," Yong said. "Light is a very interesting place to start."

Growing up in Hong Kong, Yong's family was too poor to afford electricity. He remembers reusing and repurposing as many items as possible, and when he couldn't sleep at night, looking out the window to see people walking through the streetlight.

There's intrigue in both the light, and the dark, he added.

The stage and props are all self-contained and portable, making the show infinitely mobile, and Yong hopes to tour the performance after its Toronto premier.

Details

Zata Omm Dance Projects' performance of vox:lumen

- Harbourfront Centre through March 7, at 8 p.m.
- Tickets are $35 to $40.

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For and against

Opposing views of the ongoing walkouts at U of T and York University

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GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Aisha Barry
GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Marco Fonseca
GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Ramzi Abdul Wahab — Digital enterprise management student, undergrad, U of T

As an international student from Lebanon, Wahab is angry the strike is happening now.

"We are close to finishing the semester and now we can't get the education we paid for," he said. "It just shows lack of empathy from the university and the union."

Wahab started an online group Monday called Students Against the Strike, allowing more than 200 students from three campuses to voice their opinions. They don't want to be used as a bargaining chip to influence the strike in anyone's favour, Wahab said.

Both sides "want to use the students as a leveraging tool," he said, adding that many professors won't be able to mark assignments on time without the help of teaching assistants.

"The students don't want any part of it. We just want our education and to graduate. We paid for this."

Aisha Barry — Economics graduate student, York University

Barry has worked as a teaching assistant since last year, grading papers, helping students with their assignments and supervising exams. She's opposed to the strike and voted against it.

"For the situation to come to this halt, it is very sad," she said as she walked the picket line Wednesday at Glendon campus.

She said she's required to walk the picket line to be paid.

"Look what the strike does. I can't teach, I can't study or do research — I have to stand here in the cold," Barry said. "I can't even stay with my kids."

Although she understands the need for a better contract, she is more concerned about the "unnecessary" delay the labour standoff will cause.

"I took five courses this semester so I could finish and graduate in June and go look for a job," she said. "This is going to cause trouble for so many people."

Marco Fonseca — Contract teacher, York University

For the past 15 years, Fonseca has been contract faculty, splitting his time teaching international studies at Glendon campus and social studies at Keele campus.

"That's the only way to get enough work sometimes," he said.

But he's growing tired of this ordeal.

"I'm teaching the same courses a 10-year, full-time faculty would teach," he said. "What I'm asking for is a chance not to reapply for the same job every year."

If this strike is causing damage, the university should take the blame entirely, he said.

"We've been at the bargaining table for months, and we haven't been able to get the university to move on any of the issues," he said.

It is unfortunate that they now have to come to the picket lines "to make ends meet," he said. But it's their only way to send a strong message to the administration.

Scarborough

Truck strikes, kills pedestrian

A pedestrian died after being struck by a truck in Scarborough Wednesday afternoon.

Paramedics were called the scene around 4:40 p.m. at Markham Road and Finch Avenue East.

Emergency crews found the pedestrian, a woman in her 40s, without vital signs, and called for a coroner. She was pronounced dead a short time later.

Const. Clint Stibbe of traffic services said that the collision occurred when a tractor-trailer westbound on Finch Avenue East attempted to turn right onto northbound Markham Road. The woman, who was crossing at the time, was struck and fatally injured.

The driver remained at the scene, Stibbe said.

Toronto police were investigating and Markham Road was closed from Nugget Avenue to Nashdene Road. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A schoolyard fight? Not really. Teacher Julianna Ozorio works with James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic High School students Lina Freire and Jeffrey Carmelo in a stage-combat workshop. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Students learn the art of battle

Theatre. Area youth get a taste of true (stage) combat

A room full of high-school students took turns slapping each other in the face, punching each other in the gut and dragging one another by the hair in the Mirvish Rehearsal Hall.

And their teacher Julianna Orozio describes the experience as "better than winning the lottery."

Drama students from James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic High School were invited to a workshop by Mirvish Productions. On Wednesday morning, fight director Joe Bostick showed them the art of fighting without actually fighting.

"We as a school would never be able to afford to bring somebody for a stage-combat workshop," Orozio said.

The drama teacher at the school near Keele Avenue and Finch Avenue W. jumped at the chance to give 25 of her students time with Bostick. Her school is also one of four that Mirvish Productions provided tickets to for the matinee of The Heart of Robin Hood.

Schools were chosen by the TDSB and TCDSB based on their enthusiasm for the arts and where it would "normally be out of reach financially," said Denise Anderson of Mirvish Productions.

For many of Orozio's students, this was their first professional theatre experience.

"My kids don't have the gift of seeing professional theatre," said Orozio. "One, because it's a lot of travel for them because most professional theatre is downtown.... Two, because it's expensive. That's the reality."

Orozio was thrilled to give her students a treat. The school was deeply affected by losing 15-year-old Michael Menjivar to a shooting last October.

Orozio joined the school three years ago to help build the drama program, which only offered one class at the time.

She already has some students interested in pursuing acting professionally, including Grade 11 student Lina Freire. When Freire watched the movie version of Hairspray, she was hooked.

"I watched it seven times. I learned all the dance moves to it and the songs," she said. "I was a little shy before, and the program let me break through my shyness a little."

Now she performs for birthday parties as characters like Disney's mermaid Ariel.

Bostick's workshop was "amazing" for Freire. "This was a great opportunity to get outside of our community and experience more," she added.

"It's nice that they show they care for our school."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

SIU reopens case of woman injured in OPP 'interaction'

Ontario's police watchdog is reopening an investigation into injuries suffered by a woman during an incident involving a provincial police sergeant in Orillia.

The Special Investigations Unit says Maria Farrell was injured in 2013 during an "interaction" with OPP Sgt. Russell Watson.

Its initial investigation determined that early on April 2, 2013, OPP responded to a call in the central Ontario city.

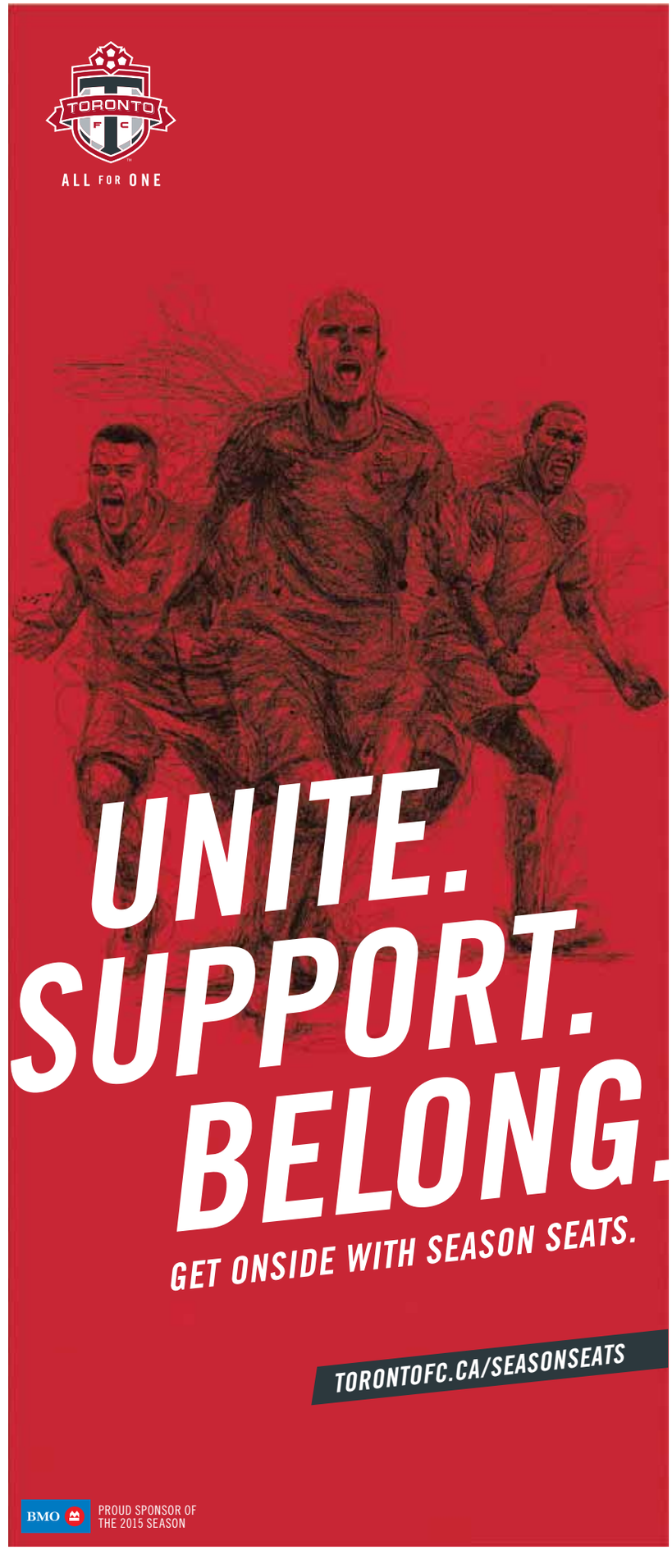
The police watchdog says there was an interaction between Farrell and the officer and that the woman's left leg was broken.

The SIU concluded at the time that there were no reasonable grounds to believe a criminal offence was committed by Watson. Farrell was charged with assaulting and obstructing a police officer, but Ontario Court Justice George Beatty dismissed the charges in December.

As a result of comments Beatty made regarding Watson's conduct, the SIU decided to review the file, including the judge's reasons for judgment and transcripts from the trial.

Following that review, the SIU says it decided to reopen the case but will make no further comment while the investigation is ongoing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Chill your way to good health

Health. Metro takes a trip to — and inside — cryotherapy chamber

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
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Cristiano Ronaldo, Demi Moore and Kobe Bryant do it. Minka Kelly and Mandy Moore Instagrammed their sessions.

Glamour called it the "Latest Insane Sports Treatment Celebrities are Obsessed With," and New York Magazine wrote a gushing first-hand account of doing it at the only place it's available in New York.

It's called cryotherapy, and, turns out, it's available right here in Toronto, too.

Chilling fact

–180 C

How low the temperature can go.

Roman Gersh opened Cryotherapy Health and Wellness, located on Finch near Dufferin, about a year ago.

His office is about the size of a walk-in closet. You enter through the side door of a large brown building that also houses a strip club, divorce lawyers and an import-export business.

Inside, there's a small desk, a couch and the main event: A big, beige cryotherapy chamber.

Gersh himself is kind and personable. He explains that the chamber uses liquid nitrogen to cool the air inside down quickly, to -140 or even -180 C.

"What we're trying to achieve is to force the brain to trigger certain beneficial mechanisms that it wouldn't naturally do," he said. "We achieve that by cooling the surface of the skin to about 10 C, which sends a signal to the brain that you're pretty much freezing."

People do this willingly for the purported benefits.

Metro reporter Jessica Smith Cross stripped down and let the temperature dip to test cryotherapy health claims made by some big-name stars. CONTRIBUTED

Cryotherapy was developed more than 30 years ago. It's used on individual body parts, or the whole body, largely as a way to help sports players recover faster — and with less discomfort than the traditional ice bath — from intense workouts.

For the average person, there are all sorts of purported benefits.

Your body burns up to 800 calories as it fights to stay warm during each three-minute session, proponents say. Plus, the treatment — which costs $45 to $60 — is also said to release endorphins that relieve stress; collagen that smoothes the skin; and a shot of adrenalin.

Some use it to relieve arthritis, pain, inflammation and psoriasis.

Gersh says he believes, from his experience alone, it can relieve seasonal allergies. If you're a runner, hitting the road after a session means you can go half an hour longer than normal, he says.

Gersh went into the cryotherapy business after he stumbled across articles about it online, while looking for something else for his wife. He became intrigued.

He has no medical training but took courses in cryotherapy in the U.S. when he bought the machine.

Since then, he's seen the popularity grow among athletes and people with medical issues, but says, so far, not too many clients come to his office looking for a spa, seeking the beauty benefits of the rich and famous.

"Maybe it just hasn't gotten that popular in Canada yet."

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The cryotherapy chamber

Not fun, but better than waiting at a cold bus bay

Standing in my underwear in -140 C for three minutes won't hurt me, says Roman Gersh.

I am skeptical.

"It's a dry cold," he says.

That phrase is usually used by Canadians parsing the difference between winter climates, mostly, in my experience, Winnipeggers explaining why their winter isn't really that bad.

I have never really bought it from them, but now think it had better be true.

Gersh leaves the office so I can strip down to my bra and underwear in private. I change my socks, because any dampness will freeze my feet, and I step into the super-thick slippers provided. I put on my MEC mittens. I am ready.

I step inside the cryo chamber and close the door. It's a small, insulated cylinder.

Step on in: Roman Gersh with the cryotherapy chamber available at his business. CONTRIBUTED

Gersh re-enters the room and raises the platform I'm standing on so my head is above the top of the chamber.

A cold steam of nitrogen pours in and Gersh tells me to lift my head — breathing the nitrogen won't hurt me, but getting some oxygen, too, is never a bad idea, he says.

Oh, it's cold.

I'd read somewhere that some think this feels like a sauna. You know, a hot one. That is bull.

I'm getting a little scared and wonder what this is doing to me. Gersh tells me to relax, put my shoulders down.

I comply and the cold settles in. I'm getting used to it. I start to shiver — bigger, convulsive shakes than I'd normally get on a cold day, but it's OK. I realize this isn't so bad.

After two minutes and 25 seconds of about -140 C, Gersh tells me it can go colder and longer after my first try, but he's going to let me out.

He pops the door and walks out of the office to give me privacy again.

I step out and dress. Over the next few minutes, I realize I'm feeling happy and calm. I'm super-chatty with Gersh.

I realize I'm getting a taste of the endorphins I usually get after running a half-marathon or more. This isn't bad.

It wasn't fun, exactly, but I think waiting in the cold Finch Station bus bay on my way there was worse. It was longer and, somehow, just felt worse.

Oh right, this was a dry cold. **JESSICA SMITH CROSS/METRO**

Test of science. Expert says not enough studies to support many claims

The science backs up some, but not all of the claims Roman Gersh and others make about cryotherapy, one expert says.

Joseph Costello, a senior research associate at England's University of Portsmouth, is one of the world's few experts in the field. His work backs up the basic premise on which health and beauty claims are based, but the exact benefits are less certain.

"There are a lot of claims being made about a three-minute exposure burning so many calories and it being used for weight loss. However, to my knowledge, there is no quality scientific literature to support these claims," he said.

While people typically shiver during and after a session, thereby increasing their metabolic rate and burning more calories, claims of burning 800 calories in three minutes aren't reliable, he said.

There have been limited studies that show people see an increase in adrenalin, endorphins and anti-inflammatory proteins after cryotherapy, which, in theory, could reduce pain.

"But these studies have been few and far between, so the scientific literature is lacking good evidence to support this," Costello said.

As for immediately being able to run a half-hour longer, that's unlikely, he said. But there is some limited evidence to show it might improve your sleep, which could, in theory, lead to a better workout the next day.

Costello said his work has found evidence of some risk. It's possible to be burned by the extreme cold, and cryotherapy is not advisable for anyone with cardiac problems. "You're exposing the body to extremely cold temperatures so it's quite important that safety checks are done beforehand and individuals who are unfit to do the treatment are not put through it," he warned.

JESSICA SMITH CROSS/METRO

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Artist venue set to open in Lansdowne

New venture. Pair of women look to liven up old Bike Pirates space with a spot that celebrates food, music and the DIY spirit

GILBERT NGABO
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Remember the space that used to house Bike Pirates on Bloor West?

Well, it may become the centre of attention once again, thanks to Jess Montebello and Erika Supply, two young women who want to liven up the Lansdowne neighbourhood.

Their new venture is called D-beatstro and promises to be a physically and financially accessible space for show planners and event throwers. It is a response to the need for more places like this that can accommodate people of all ages, said Montebello. "We love being part of a vibrant community," she said, adding she has spent the last 10 years booking all sorts of shows in cities like Toronto, Oshawa and Guelph.

"Food, art, music, all those are our favourite things, so we thought, why not putting them all together in one place?"

The official launch is planned for April but a sneak peek over the weekend saw a multitude of community artists exhibiting their products and community members getting a feel of what is ahead.

Patrick Hunter, a local painter and designer, said D-beatstro couldn't come at a better time for his business. "I have only been selling my stuff online, but this is definitely great that I can meet and talk to my clients face to face," he said. "And it also gets me out of bed."

The place will also be about building a community bond through social and creative activities, Montebello explained. It will be a venue for live music, punk rock bingo, community discussions and movie screenings, she added. D-beatstro will also serve as a restaurant, offering vegetarian/vegan-friendly food, and brewing Dark City coffee, she said.

Quick facts

- Montebello has been very active in organizing DIY spaces and resources, such as Do It Together Phonebook and Thigh High Clubhouse.
- Montebello is also a herbalist, and hopes to introduce her own line of herbal teas to D-beatstro.
- Supply gained experience booking punk shows for over 10 years both in Ottawa and Toronto.

Jess Montebello, centre, opened D-beatstro to give local artists like Patrick Hunter, right, and Rihkee Strapp a place to showcase their work. GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Politics

Rob Ford's tie fetches $16K on eBay

A tie that appears to be the one Rob Ford wore on Nov. 5, 2013, when he admitted smoking crack cocaine has gone for more than $16,000 on eBay.

There were 111 bids on the tie over the seven-day auction with the winner putting in a bid of $16,100 for the tie featuring logos from NFL teams past and present. Other items up for auction included a Saskatchewan Roughriders jersey that went for $1,550, and patterned pants he was photographed wearing on a shopping trip to Wal-Mart that sold for $660.

Ford's assistant has said the former Toronto mayor is selling items on eBay as part of a spring cleaning.

Ford became internationally notorious when he admitted having smoked crack cocaine, "probably in one of my drunken stupors."

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K-pop genre is so much more than a pony-riding prance in shades: T.O. DJ

Dance party. Psy may have introduced the music to the masses, but it's being enjoyed far beyond the viral smash

BACKSTAGE PASS
Ian Gormely
scene@metronews.ca

In the minds of many, K-pop lived and died with the astronomical viral success of Gangnam Style.

But the musical phenomenon is far more than a single song or artist. K-pop not only survived Psy, it's now the biggest musical genre in East Asia.

It's had a tougher go here in North America, but K-pop continues to make a significant dent with young, Internet savvy listeners.

"Its part of the milieu as much as One Direction is," say Gerald Belanger. "It's part of their daily mass media consumption."

Belanger would know. The DJ hosts the monthly K-pop dance party Pop Goes the World, which celebrates its third anniversary Saturday. It's these young and hungry fans who have kept the night going, even in the months before most of the world thought that a guy pretending to ride a horse in time to EDM beats was a good way to kill four minutes.

K-pop moves fast, not just in terms of BPM, but also the life cycle of its artists. Groups formed in 2008 are already relegated to "an older crowd." Even the fan base has trouble keeping up.

"There's definitely a turnover," says Belanger. "There's hardly anybody coming from three years ago."

When Belanger first approached the staff at Andy Poolhall about hosting a K-pop night, three years ago, their first reaction was, "What is K-pop? ... At first it was a flat 'No,'" he recalls. "Then a week later they said, 'You know, I clicked on one of those Youtube links you sent me, then another, and another. Now I'm hooked.'"

The appeal is as much visual as it is musical.

K-pop fans dance the night away at a Pop Goes the World party. The monthly bash celebrates its third anniversary this week. CONTRIBUTED

"The stuff wouldn't even be popular without Youtube," he says.

The choreographed dance moves artists like Girls Generation and Brown Eyed Girls perform in their videos are regularly mimicked by PGTW's dancers. "It's swag, it's glitter, it's platinum ... incorporated with a Korean aesthetic. It's very eclectic."

Bubble Pop! Pop Goes the World's Three-year Birthday Bash: 9 p.m., March 7 at Club 120, 120 Church St.

From Korea, with love

Exports a-plentiful

"They're the entertainment providers for all of East Asia now," says Belanger.

"They have honed and perfected their entertainment industry."

Part of the nation's domination comes from the industry's ability to communicate and react to their fans. "There's a feedback loop between the fans and the labels."

That loop has expanded into a cottage industry where fans become famous in their own right, sometimes eclipsing the artists they once championed.

"When there is a slump fans are noisy about it," says Belanger. "It keeps creating better content."

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Ontario town suing U.S. company over guardrails

ET Plus end units: Authorities across Canada are awaiting test results from the U.S. before deciding what to do about thousands of the safety devices, which could cause guardrails to rip through cars and motorists instead of protecting them in crashes. Several provinces have stopped installing the units, which would cost tens of millions of dollars to remove, while the town of Stratford, Ont., has launched a $500-million class action against the manufacturer. The lawsuit, filed in Ontario Superior Court, alleges Trinity Industries secretly made unauthorized changes to the ET Plus about 10 years ago and failed to warn anyone about "serious failures."

PHOTO: COURTESY TRINITY INDUSTRIES

TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tory sentencing initiative a political move, critics say

New legislation. 'A life sentence in Canada will henceforth mean exactly that — a sentence for life,' said PM Stephen Harper

The Conservative government's latest tough-on-crime initiative to make life sentence a sentence for life without parole appears to be aimed at scoring political points rather than protecting the public, some critics and legal experts said Wednesday.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper told a Toronto crowd his government will introduce new legislation next week to ensure that what he called the country's "most dangerous violent offenders" will not be allowed back on the streets.

The new bill will "ensure that for the most heinous offenders and the most horrific crimes, a life sentence in Canada will henceforth mean exactly that — a sentence for life," Harper announced in front of a crowd that included families of murder victims.

The legislation would apply to those convicted of first-degree murder involving: the killing of police officers or correctional officers; terrorism; kidnapping or sexual assault; and crimes "of a particularly brutal nature." It would also apply to those who commit high treason, an offence that involves attempting to harm or kill the Queen, taking arms against Canada or helping an enemy at war with Canada.

While hesitant to judge the proposed changes until the bill is tabled, some critics and legal experts said the announcement raises several red flags.

"We already have a system that recognizes that the Paul Bernardos and the Picktons of the world should never be released," Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau said in Vancouver.

"I think a lot of this is campaigning on fear, which (Harper) is extremely good at, but I think we can all agree that bad criminals should not be released and we have to make sure that we're getting that balance right," he said.

"Most dangerous killers are already denied parole and held for life," NDP justice critic Françoise Boivin said in a statement.

"Sentencing reform should be focused on improving public safety, not on scoring political points," she said.

Benjamin Berger, a criminal-law expert at York University's Osgoode Hall law school, said the announcement comes across as "political sleight of hand."

"As things currently stand, the community is protected by the individualized judgments of a parole board," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

In detail

Currently, those who are convicted of first-degree murder face an automatic sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole for 25 years.

- According to the latest Correctional Service of Canada data on recidivism available, 658 convicted murderers were released on full parole between January 1975 and the end of March 1990. Of those, five were convicted of committing a second murder — three of first-degree and two of second.

Michael Zehaf-Bibeau

MPs to see Parliament Hill shooter's video

After weeks of speculation, members of Parliament will get a chance Friday to see the video Michael Zehaf Bibeau made last October before he killed a Canadian soldier and stormed Parliament Hill.

RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson will use an open meeting of the House of Commons public-safety committee to provide a "detailed update" of the investigation into Zehaf Bibeau's deadly attack on Cpl. Nathan Cirillo, said a source familiar with the matter. The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed the video would be shown to the committee. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Al-Shabaab video

Tory MP says Edmonton Mall Facebook post was wrong move

One of the federal Conservatives's own MPs says the party's use of the terror threat against West Edmonton Mall in a partisan Facebook post steps over the line.

On Monday, the party posted an image from an al-Shabaab video that suggested a terrorist attack on West Edmonton Mall. Underneath the image was an encouragement to sign a petition.

Edmonton-Centre Conservative MP Laurie Hawn said he doesn't think the post was appropriate, adding that terrorist threats have to be dealt with in a nuanced way.

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO IN EDMONTON

Civil service

Veterans Affairs morale low, says survey

The most recent survey of federal employees shows Veterans Affairs Canada is an increasingly unhappy place with plunging morale and a frazzled workforce.

The evaluation, published by Statistics Canada for the federal Treasury Board, asks dozens of questions on topics ranging from satisfaction with equipment to workplace harassment.

It shows that the number of staff who say the quality of their work has suffered — either because of fewer resources or a lack of departmental stability — has more than doubled since 2008.

That level of dissatisfaction is between 1.5 and two times the rate of the overall federal civil service. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec

Liberal MLA removes ad from Islamic centre

Following public criticism from Premier Philippe Couillard, Liberal MLA Marc Tanguay has removed his photo and contact information from the FATH community centre.

The Islamic centre's virtual library includes texts openly extolling violence against women, and premier Couillard said public funds should not be used to spread such opinions.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Washington

Keystone still kaput: Senate

The U.S. Senate on Wednesday failed to override President Barack Obama's veto of a bill to construct the $8-billion Canadian Keystone XL pipeline, which would connect the Alberta oilsands to Gulf Coast refineries.

The 62-37 vote is expected to be one of many veto showdowns between Republicans, who control Congress, and Obama in his final term.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U of T opens archive of leaked documents

Transparency.
Terrorism 'rare,' says NSA leaker, and should not be used to justify limiting freedom

The first online database of classified documents leaked by former National Security Agency systems analyst Edward Snowden has been created in Canada. WIKILEAKS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Terrorism is "an extraordinarily rare natural disaster" and should not be used as an excuse by government to pass laws that limit our rights and freedoms, former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden said Wednesday.

Snowden made the comments via video link at the unveiling in Toronto of the Snowden Archive — an online database of hundreds of classified U.S. government documents he leaked to the media in 2013.

The archive is a joint project between Canadian Journalists for Free Expression and the Politics of Surveillance Project at the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto. It is the first time the leaked documents have been indexed and made fully searchable online.

Snowden, who remains exiled in Russia since leaking the classified documents about the NSA's surveillance programs, has often spoken publicly against over-reaching laws passed in many countries in the wake of terrorist attacks.

Asked to comment on Ottawa's anti-terrorism bill, which will be scrutinized at a Commons committee starting next week, Snowden said it was "an emulation of the American Patriot Act."

"They're trying to say 'look we face an extraordinary national security risk that poses an existential threat to Canada,'" he said.

"Terrorism is an extraordinarily rare natural disaster ... but no matter what we do, no matter what laws we pass, we cannot throw away all of our rights, all of our liberties, all of our traditional freedoms, because we're afraid of rare instances of criminal activity."

Snowden said freedom and liberty are worth some level of risk. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Boys falling behind in school globally: Report

Around the globe, boys spend less time on homework than girls — almost a two-hour difference a week here in Canada — which may in part explain why they are more likely to struggle academically, says a new report on the gender gap in education.

Data taken from international tests and questionnaires given to students in developed nations by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development found that on average, Canadian boys spend 4.6 hours a week on homework, and girls 6.4. The OECD average was 4.2 for boys and 5.5 hours for girls.

Boys are also less likely than girls to spend time reading or say they enjoy school — or even arrive at school on time — leaving some "(feeling) disaffected and not motivated," it found.

Girls, however, are more likely to suffer from math anxiety — even those who do well in the subject.

Indigo Esmonde, a professor at the University of Toronto's faculty of education, said anxiety can be a real issue for high achievers because "being good at math is a bigger part of their identities" and, for girls, they "face stereotypes about not being mathematically smart, and often have to work harder to be respected. So, there are higher stakes for girls."

At Roberta Bondar Public School in Brampton, the needs of both boys and girls are taken into account in the school's senior single-sex classrooms, which are offered as an option alongside co-ed programs for Grades 7 and 8.

Grade 7 boys' teacher David Tran said homework is not an issue in his class — he assigns it every day and the boys complete it — and he knows, because he checks it every day.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Education

Findings from the OECD report on the gender gap in education:

- Boys are more likely than girls to play video games.
- Boys are more likely than girls to spend time on computers and the Internet.
- Boys are less likely than girls to enjoy activities connected with reading.
- Boys are more likely than girls to play chess and program computers.
- Boys are more likely than girls to have negative attitudes towards school.

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Coal mine explosion kills at least 24 in eastern Ukraine

Donetsk. Seven bodies were loaded onto a truck late Wednesday

A rebel-held city scarred by months of conflict in eastern Ukraine suffered more tragedy Wednesday when a methane gas explosion in a coal mine killed at least 24 workers and left nine missing.

As rescue efforts stretched past sundown, separatist authorities were accused by Ukraine's government of failing to do enough to save the lives of the miners.

The blast occurred before dawn more than 1,000 metres underground at the Zasyadko mine in the city of Donetsk in the coal-rich Donbass region. Nearly a year of bitter fighting by pro-Moscow rebels and Ukrainian troops in the east has killed more than 6,000 people.

Rebel officials said the accident was caused by the ever-present danger of methane gas, rather than artillery fire.

There were contradictory accounts of the toll of dead and missing by the rival authorities. The rebel government that controls Donetsk was slow to divulge information, while a senior official in the capital of Kyiv was swift to give a death toll of 32, only to retract it several hours later.

The blast occurred as 230 workers were in the mine, and nearly 200 of them were quickly evacuated, but uncertainty lingered throughout the day about dozens of others.

Rebel officials insisted into the afternoon that only one person had died. But a slightly wounded miner who gave his name only as Sergei told The Associated Press that he saw five bodies being pulled out.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukrainian coal miners load the bodies of colleagues killed in Wednesday morning's explosion at Zasyadko mine in Donetsk, Ukraine. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Nuclear deal. Kerry rebuts Netanyahu's criticism

U.S. officials sought Wednesday to tamp down expectations of a substantial preliminary nuclear deal with Iran by the March deadline while working to move past the political dust kicked up by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's criticism of an emerging agreement's contours.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Washington was well aware of the potential nuclear danger Iran poses to countries in the region and will endorse only an agreement that seriously and verifiably crimps Tehran's ability to make atomic arms.

"We continue to be focused on reaching a good deal, the right deal, that closes off any paths that Iran could have towards fissile material for a weapon and that protects the world from the enormous threat that we all know a nuclear-armed Iran would pose," Kerry told reporters at the end of meetings with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

The Iranian diplomat told NBC News on Wednesday, "We believe that we are very close, very close."

The sides hope to have a progress report by late March allowing them to finesse details into a final pact by June. But a senior U.S. official appeared to walk back from the significance of that first stage, describing it as only "an understanding that's going to have to be filled out with lots of detail" by the June final target date.

The official's comments could be an attempt to stretch the interpretation of what should be achieved by March, allowing further negotiations even if nothing more is achieved than a vague declaration.

They contrast sharply with what the West laid down earlier.

Justifying an extension of the talks on Nov. 24, Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond of Britain — one of the five powers backing the U.S. at the talks — said he expected "an agreement on substance" by March. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston. Tsarnaev carried out bombing: Defence

The question, for all practical purposes, is no longer whether Dzhokhar Tsarnaev took part in the Boston Marathon bombing — it's whether he deserves to die for it.

In a startling opening statement at the nation's biggest terrorism trial in nearly 20 years, Tsarnaev's own lawyer told a jury that the 21-year-old former college student committed the crime.

"It *was* him," said defence attorney Judy Clarke, one of the nation's foremost death-penalty specialists.

But in a strategy aimed at saving Tsarnaev from a death sentence, she argued that he had fallen under the malevolent influence of his now-dead older brother, Tamerlan.

"The evidence will not establish and we will not argue that Tamerlan put a gun to Dzhokhar's head or that he forced him to join in the plan," Clarke said, "but you will hear evidence about the kind of influence that this older brother had."

Three people were killed and more than 260 hurt when two shrapnel-packed pressure-cooker bombs exploded near the finish line on April 15, 2013. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston Marathon bombing survivor Marc Fucarile, centre, and his wife Jennifer, left, walk past protester Jose Briceno, right, as they leave federal court, Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indonesia

Australia offers prisoner swap

Two convicted Australian drug smugglers arrived Wednesday at an Indonesian island prison where they are to be executed by firing squad along with seven other foreigners, despite clemency appeals from several of their governments. An Indonesian is also scheduled to be executed.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Africa

Hundreds evacuated as wildfire burns

About 500 people fled their homes in South Africa's city of Cape Town as a wildfire defied rain and firefighters with smoke and flames rising for a fourth day Wednesday. Three homes were destroyed and five more were damaged overnight by the fire, an emergency spokeswoman said.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Korea

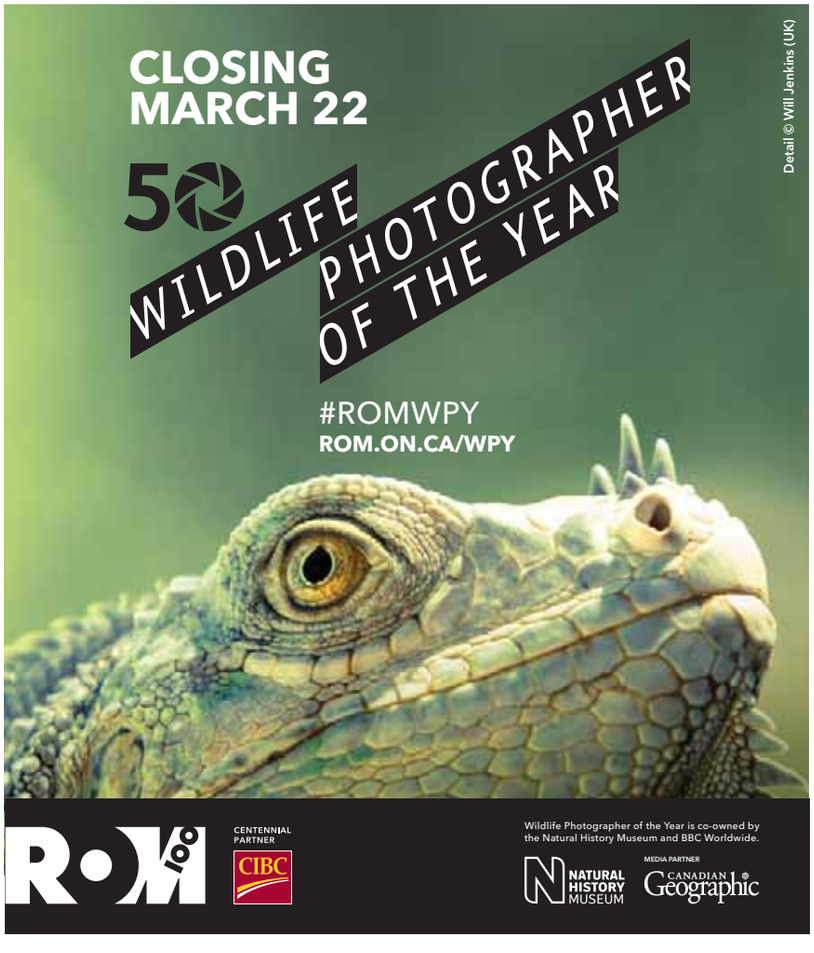
U.S. ambassador attacked

U.S. Ambassador Mark Lippert was attacked by a man wielding a razor and screaming that the rival Koreas should be unified, South Korean police and media said Thursday. TV images showed Lippert bleeding from his head and wrist. He was taken to a hospital for treatment.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Libya

Italian ships rescue migrants

In dramatic sea rescues north of Libya, a flotilla of ships saved more than 1,000 migrants and refugees, while 10 migrants perished in the southern Mediterranean, Italian officials said Wednesday. Rescue vessels, including from Italy's coast guard and navy, and three cargo ships saved 941 people in seven separate operations that began Tuesday, Italy's coast guard said.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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New Jersey

No questions at township council

A New Jersey mayor has banned the public from asking questions at township council meetings.

The Philadelphia Inquirer reports that Evesham Mayor Randy Brown began the policy this year. It came after a tense meeting in December in which a resident asked about a tax abatement. Brown spoke over the question. Since then, the council has allowed only public comments, not questions, at meetings. The Republican mayor has said he may run for governor in 2017. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Texas

Man arrested for sword-cane at jail

A San Antonio man trying to visit his jailed son also landed behind bars after being caught with a combination cane and two-foot sword.

Jose Gonzalez, 53, faces a charge of unlawfully carrying a weapon.

A sheriff's spokesman said the cane set off an alarm when it passed through a scanner.

An officer twisted off the top of the cane and drew out the sword, and Gonzalez was arrested. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australia

Radio shock jocks in hot water

A radio station could lose its licence over a 2012 prank, in which two Australian DJs impersonated Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles as they phoned a London hospital in 2012 to ask about the condition of the Duchess of Cambridge, who had been hospitalized for severe morning sickness.

A nurse who transferred the call committed suicide after the broadcast. In its judgment, Australia's the High Court said the station did not obtain the consent of the hospital's staffers to air the recording.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority can now pursue penalties against the station. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oldest fossil found of early human ancestor

This 2013 photo shows the LD 350-1 mandible, just steps from where it was sighted in Ethiopia by Chalachew Seyoum, an ASU graduate student.

KAYE REED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Science. Jawbone fragment estimated to be 2.8 million years old

A fragment of jawbone found in Ethiopia is the oldest known fossil from an evolutionary tree branch that eventually led to modern humans, scientists reported Wednesday.

The fossil comes from very close to the time that the early human branch split away from more ape-like ancestors best known for the fossil skeleton Lucy. So it gives a rare glimpse of what very early members of our branch looked like.

At about 2.8 million years old, the partial jawbone pushes back the fossil record by at least 400,000 years for the human branch, which scientists call Homo. It was found two years ago at a site not far from where Lucy was unearthed. Africa is a hotbed for human ancestor fossils, and scientists from Arizona State University have worked for years at the site in northeast Ethiopia, trying to find fossils from the dimly understood period when the Homo genus, or group, arose.

Our species, called Homo sapiens, is the only surviving member of this group.

The jaw fragment, which includes five teeth, was discovered in pieces one morning by Chalachew Seyoum, an Ethiopian graduate student at Arizona State. He said he spotted a tooth poking out of the ground while looking for fossils.

The discovery is described in a paper released Wednesday by the journal Science.

Arizona State's William Kimbel, an author of the paper, said it's not clear whether the fossil came from a known early species of Homo or whether it reveals a new one. Field work is continuing to look for more fossils at the site. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Japanese woman to celebrate 117th birthday

Japan's Misao Okawa who is recognized as the world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records, is celebrated by government official Takehiro Ogura at a nursing home in Osaka, western Japan Wednesday, March 4, 2015, ahead of her birthday. Okawa will turn 117 on Thursday. KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. attempted to deport man shot by L.A. police

California. No country would claim homeless man with mental illness, say immigration officials

A homeless foreigner shot to death by Los Angeles police was in the country illegally after serving time for a bank robbery, but couldn't be deported because no country would take him, U.S. immigration authorities said Wednesday.

France issued travel documents for a man identified as Charley Saturmin Robinet but rescinded them in June 2013 after determining it was an assumed name and the man was really from Cameroon, said U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) spokeswoman Virginia Kice in a statement.

ICE, which had issued a deportation order in April 2013, said Cameroon consular officials failed to respond to repeated requests for travel documents. Cameroonian officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

The man, known as "Africa" in the rundown Los Angeles area of Skid Row, was shot to death Sunday. The confrontation that led to his death was recorded on a bystander's cellphone and viewed millions of times online. Authorities said the man tried to grab a rookie police officer's gun, prompting three other officers to shoot him.

Like many people on Skid Row, the man suffered from mental illness and his background was murky. He told U.S. authorities he was from Cameroon and gave a different name — Keunang — after France rejected him, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The man was in immigration custody in September 2013 when a federal judge in California ordered him to a halfway house. The man had no place to stay and no permanent address.

This February 2000 photo shows a man, mistakenly identified by the assumed name of Charley Saturmin Robinet, who was killed by L.A. police on Sunday.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

He had served roughly 13 years in prison and spent six months in the halfway house before he was released in May 2014, said Ed Ross, a spokesman for the Bureau of Prisons.

Kice said the man regularly reported to immigration officials as required by terms of his release. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ferguson. Report blasts police for discrimination

The Justice Department cleared a white former Ferguson, Mo., police officer on Wednesday in the fatal shooting of an unarmed black 18-year-old — but also issued a scathing report calling for sweeping changes in city law-enforcement practices it called discriminatory and unconstitutional.

It found that the shooting occurred in an environment of systematic mistreatment of blacks, in which officials swapped racist emails and jokes without punishment and black residents were disproportionately stopped, searched, fined for petty offences and subjected to excessive force.

Officials announced 26 recommendations, including training officers in how to de-escalate confrontations and banning the use of ticketing and arrest quotas. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Changes

Ferguson no longer issues failure-to-appear warrants and has rescinded warrants for nearly 600 defendants.

Gay-marriage

Mobile, Ala., stops issuing marriage licences of any kind

The probate office in one of Alabama's biggest counties said Wednesday it will quit issuing marriage licences to anyone, after the Alabama Supreme Court ruled the state's ban on same-sex marriage is legal despite a federal court's decision to the contrary.

The all-Republican Supreme Court ordered Alabama's 68 probate judges Tuesday to stop issuing marriage licences to gay couples. The probate court in Mobile said Wednesday it would quit issuing marriage licences to anyone while reviewing the decision. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Gang rapist's comments highlight views on women widespread in India

Gender relations. Documentary film exposes misogyny of death row rapist-murderer in a country where rape is common

Indians wait for a bus at the bus stop where the victim of a deadly gang rape had boarded on Dec. 16, 2012, in New Delhi, India, Wednesday. ALTAF QADRI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

When a condemned killer said the woman he and others brutally gang-raped on a New Delhi bus was responsible for what had happened to her, his comments were shocking in their callousness and lack of remorse. But the underlying view has wide acceptance in India.

Blaming women for rape is what hundreds of millions of men there are taught to believe.

The code for women in India is simple: Dress modestly, don't go out at night, don't go to bars and clubs, don't go out alone. If you break the code, you will be blamed for the consequences.

When one of the four men sentenced to death for the high-profile gang rape of the woman in 2012 was quoted in a new documentary as saying "a girl is far more responsible for rape than a boy," he was repeating something community and religious leaders in this nation of 1.2 billion routinely say.

"A decent girl won't roam around at 9 o'clock at night. ... Housework and housekeeping is for girls, not roaming in discos and bars at night doing wrong things, wearing wrong clothes," Mukesh Singh said in the documentary, "India's Daughter," meant to be shown on Sunday, International Women's Day, in India and several other countries.

But how different were the convicted rapist's words from comments that Manohar Lal Khattar, the top elected official of Haryana state made last year?

"If a girl is dressed decently, a boy will not look at her in the wrong way," Khattar told reporters, "Freedom has to be limited. These short clothes are Western influences. Our country's tradition asks girls to dress decently."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More viewpoints

Sexual assault is common in India, justified by traditional attitudes:

- **"(I want to) end the culture of boys and girls roaming around in malls holding hands."** B.S. Yeddyurappa, chief minister of Karnataka
- **"All by herself till 3 a.m. at night in a city where people believe ... you know ... you should not be so adventurous."** Sheila Dixit, then-chief minister of Delhi
- **"This man is just following the example our leaders are setting for our young men."** Jagmati Sangwan, head of the All India Democratic Women's Association

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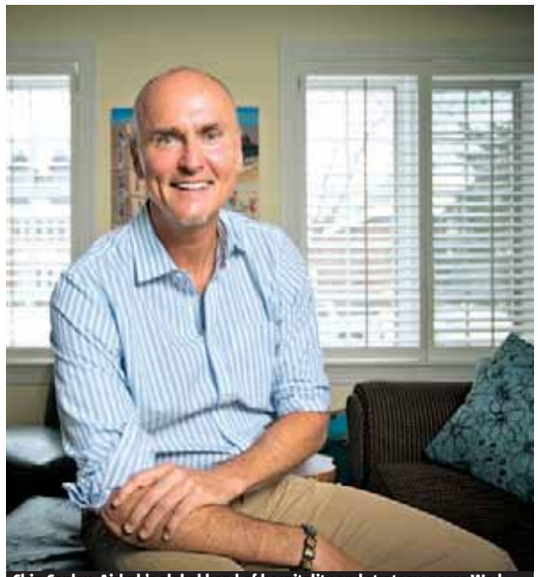
Airbnb sees enough room, hotels don't share the view



Chip Conley, Airbnb's global head of hospitality and strategy, poses Wednesday inside one of the homes in Toronto that is listed on the residence-sharing site. BERNARD WEIL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sharing economy. Airbnb has run into stiff opposition in some jurisdictions but not in Toronto

Chip Conley believes Airbnb, a fast-growing company that links homeowners with travellers seeking accommodation, is not in direct competition with traditional hotels.

"There is room for both of them," said Conley, who is head of global hospitality and strategy for Airbnb, during a visit to Toronto on Wednesday.

Conley, 54, who joined Airbnb in 2013, says he understands both Airbnb and the hotel business. He was the founder of the Joie de Vivre boutique hotel chain and still owns 18 hotels in California and New York.

"The message that I've been saying to the hotel industry is that 'this is not an either-or,' " Conley said. "I think we can coexist."

But Terry Mundell, president and CEO of the Greater Toronto Hotel Association, disputes such a suggestion.

"The issue is not about either-or," he said. "This is an issue about paying and remitting commercial taxes the same as any other commercial enterprise."

A City of Toronto official says he has not received any complaints about Airbnb.

"At this time we are not considering regulating it," said Mark Sraga, the city's director of investigations, in an email. "Toronto's zoning bylaw does not restrict renting out rooms."

Conley insisted Airbnb is not evading taxes, noting Airbnb is paying occupancy or hotel taxes where required, including in cities such as Amsterdam, San Francisco and Chicago.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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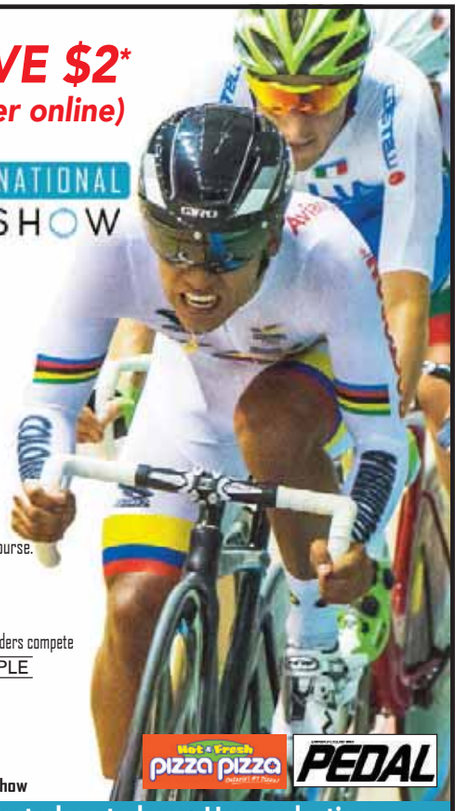

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VOICES

BIGGER IS BETTER, BUT SMALLER IS CHEAPER

Micro condos are being hyped as the next great thing in urban living. But since when did living in a shoebox become the property-owning dream?

MELISSA DUNNE
readers@metronews.ca

In the comedy Wanderlust, Paul Rudd and Jennifer Aniston get sweet-talked into buying an, ahem, micro-loft in Manhattan. At the time (the halcyon days of 2012), I laughed and laughed. Oh, New Yorkers living in their tiny boxes in the sky.

I'm not laughing now. Flash forward to early 2015 and micro condos have become one of the only serious options for some city-dwelling Canadians, like myself. With the average price of detached homes in both Vancouver and Toronto soaring past the $1-million mark, the dream of home ownership is now out of many average people's grasp.

Micro condos, realtor-speak for a condo unit that runs between 225 and 400 square feet, suddenly seem appealing. The spaces tend to attract investors looking to rent them out, rich people looking for a pied-à-terre, and not-so-rich people looking to finally get on the property ladder.

A few years ago I would have said I would never buy a micro condo. Now, I say, "Never say never." The Manhattanization of the city I call home means even the average price of a condo apartment in the 416 was an eye-watering $369,655 last month, according to the Toronto Real Estate Board.

Murphy beds used to be almost synonymous with dingy flats. But thanks to the marketing of micro condos, space-saving features are being touted as the hip new way to do city living. PHOTO BY SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

You can buy in for less if you're willing to downsize dramatically. Out in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey, a developer recently garnered media attention by reportedly offering units starting at $93,900. The catch? The suites started at 316 square feet. Another project in the heart of Toronto got my attention with its clever features, like a dishwasher in a drawer, to maximize space. The location is great and news reports say prices start at $249,999 for 300 square feet.

Despite the smaller price tag, I do have some reservations.

In the ads for these minuscule units, condo living looks so hip and fun. But in reality the big banks are said to be wary of giving mortgages for this unproven new trend. And the old rental apartment I currently share with my common-law partner is more than double the size of a micro condo. I worry we'd find living in a unit with a Murphy bed would seriously test our patience with each other.

So I, along with many other Millennials looking to buy their first place, am patiently waiting for the real estate bubble to finally burst. If that doesn't happen soon, perhaps I'll end up like those New Yorkers I used to mock smugly, and buy my very own tiny box in the sky.

Melissa Dunne is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

Micro condos at a glance

- For many young, hip urbanites, the appeal of micro condos is that they are highly polished, modern spaces that come with innovative and trendy space-saving amenities.
- The concept of micro condos may be new to Canada, but in densely populated cities such as Paris, Tokyo and Hong Kong, they have been a way of life for generations.
- There are nearly 3,000 micro condo units under construction in Toronto that are slated to be completed this year.
- In Vancouver, city bylaws dictate that condo units can be no smaller than 398 square feet, but one development is proposing "nanosuites" that would measure 200 square feet.

Metro asked those in the know: What's your take on micro condos?

Realtor

The banks are not lending on these units, so right now we can't really tell if they are going to take off or not. Micros offer living space in the very good locations ... I've seen the average size of a condo come down significantly in the last 20 years, and I think this will become a trend that lasts. Once the banks gain confidence in micro condos, first-time buyers will see them as viable options. Don't forget, the banks were skeptical about lending on condos when they first made an appearance 50 years ago, and look at them now!

Sandra Rinomato, broker/owner of Sandra Rinomato Realty, a brokerage in Toronto.

Planner

The uptake of micro condos will be successful only in exceptionally strong markets — Vancouver, Toronto, San Francisco, Boston, N.Y.C., London. From a planner's perspective, if designed thoughtfully and close to local social life and shops, these are an affordable, funky option for 20-something singles and couples. Not so for most households with kids. Over time, the real estate market will decide whether these will hold their value.

Linda Allen, community planner and managing partner at CitySpaces in Vancouver.

Micro condo dweller

Absolutely I'd buy a micro condo. It works for my lifestyle right now. In many cases there will be many people transitioning to this lifestyle ... I don't have a car ... There are four coffee shops right outside my door that aren't Starbucks. Your neighbourhood becomes your living room ... Canada as a country will become more urbanized and we'll have to accommodate that. People will be living smaller. I think there definitely is a future in micro condos.

Samuel Baron has been renting a 248-square-foot micro suite in Vancouver for just over two years.

Researcher

Small units play a big role in today's condo market. For buyers and renters, they provide an option to save on costs. For investors, they offer above-average yields. For developers, they allow projects to easier achieve pre-construction sales, facilitating new development. Micro units certainly will be needed in the future to accommodate growth (in Toronto) and maintain affordability, but the next couple years may see a case of too much, too soon. Thousands of units under 500 square feet will be completed, while population growth for younger adults is starting slow. Adding to this is their difficulty in arranging mortgage financing."

Shaun Hildebrand, senior vice president at condo research firm Urbanation.

Investment specialist

I doubt it's a passing fad. It's simply what people can afford. There is a huge market for tiny condos because many people cannot afford larger. This is Toronto's weird form of "affordable" housing. It's not likely to get any better. But it does have the effect of high turnover of those units because as people's household size increases (marriage, babies, etc.), they have a hard time staying there.

John Andrew, director of Queen's University's Executive Seminars on Corporate and Investment Real Estate in Kingston, Ont.

metro

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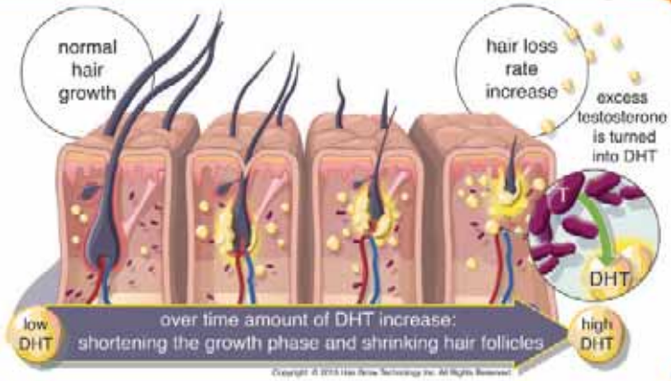
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DHT
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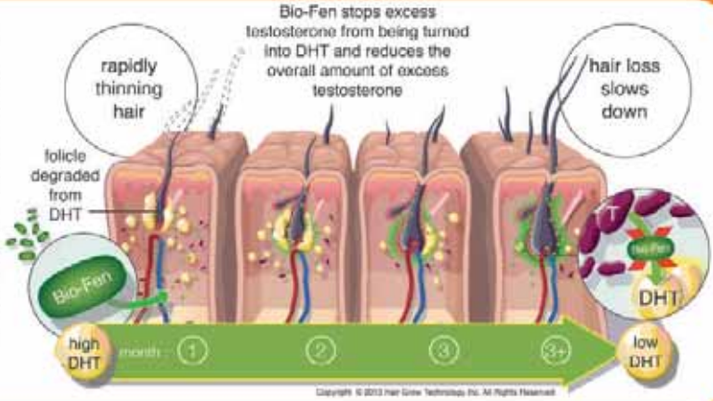
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Author of the Divergent trilogy, Veronica Roth, is writing a new book in "the vein of Star Wars." GETTY IMAGES

More from Roth on the way

Books. The author of the hugely successful Divergent trilogy is working on new series

Veronica Roth fans can start the countdown.

The Divergent author is set to write a new two-book series, HarperCollins Children's Books told The Associated Press. Currently, the books are untitled, with the first one expected in 2017 and the next in 2018.

Roth and her publisher offered few specifics, beyond saying the series is in the vein of Star Wars and will tell of a boy's "unlikely alliance" with an enemy.

"Both desperate to escape their oppressive lives, they help each other attain what they most desire: for one, redemption, and the other, revenge," the publisher announced.

In a recent email to the AP, Roth wrote that the idea "started with a character. All the other elements — setting, world, even a substantial portion of the plot — came after." She added that while she had a "pretty detailed" outline for the new series, she was still in the early stages of writing.

"That's why I'm being so vague," she explained.

Divergent, along with Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games and John Green's books helped perpetuate the strong growth of young adult novels.

When it was released last year, the first Divergent movie, quickly earned more than $100 million at the box office.

Three more movies are planned, starting with the March 20 release of Insurgent.

A Chicago resident, the 26-year-old Roth was still in college when she began Divergent, writing it in her pyjamas while on winter break from Northwestern University. She is now one of the world's most popular authors.

"I think I'd have to be a robot not to occasionally worry about expectations!" she wrote to the AP. "But mostly I try to trust my instincts. It helps that I'm really in love with this project — that makes it a joy to work on.

"I've been really taking my time with it," she said of the new series. "I've written huge sections a certain way only to cut them and start again. I've stepped away for a while, to work on other things, and then come back when I have better perspective. I've been more patient with myself and with the story. I've expanded my collection of comfortable pants and snack foods. It's all working quite well so far."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Divergent

- **The book.** Divergent, a Dystopian trilogy, was completed in 2013 and sold more than 30-million copies.
- **The movie.** The first Divergent film, starring Shailene Woodley, came out a year ago.

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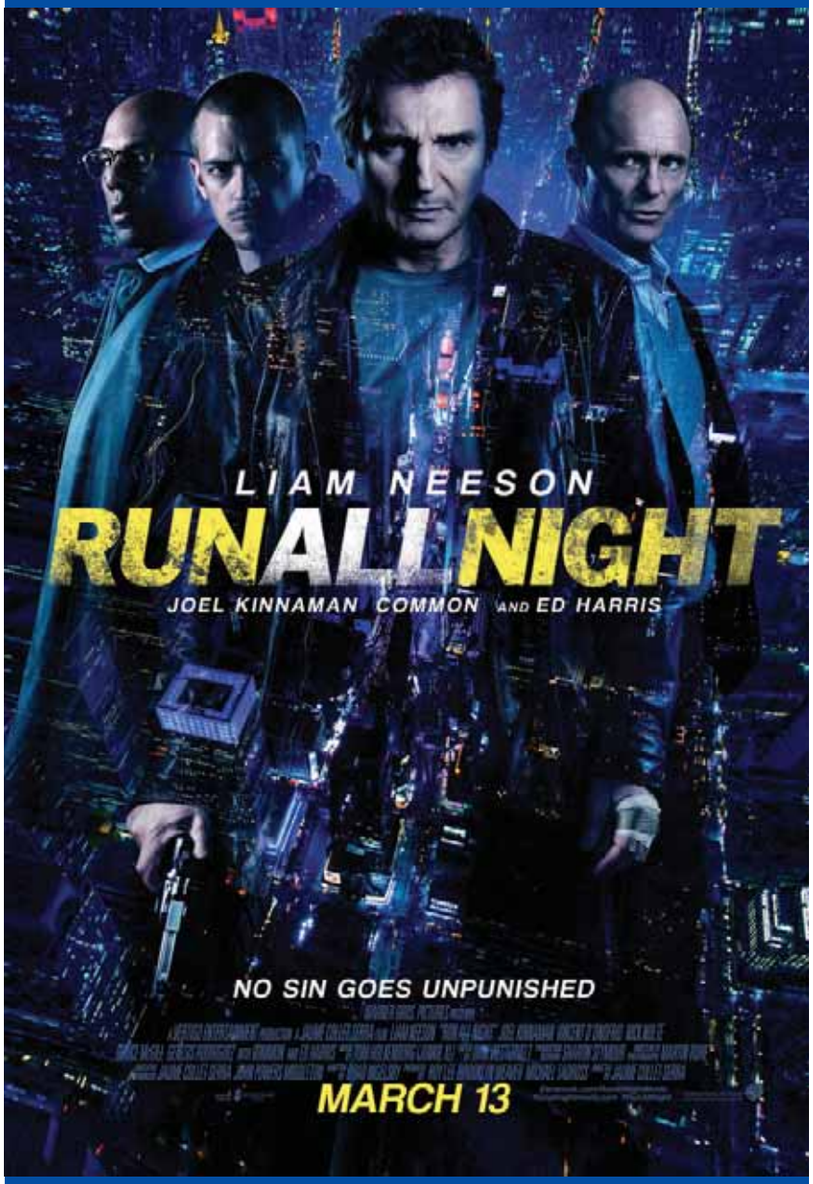

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The show that (almost) started with a bang

TV. Actors' near-collision pre-shooting reflects future clash of characters in Creek

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

Dean Winters and Josh Duhamel star in Battle Creek, which airs Sundays on Global. CBS HANDOUT

Josh Duhamel and Dean Winters had never met before starting work on the new police dramedy Battle Creek.

"I was actually driving onto the lot in Manhattan Beach for a fitting," says Winters, the actor known for his roles on Oz, 30 Rock and the Allstate Insurance commercials, "and I wasn't looking where I was going and literally, true story, almost ran Josh over. That was our first encounter."

Their jarring introduction could have been useful as they created their characters: a Battle Creek, Mich. cop and an FBI agent who butt heads on police procedure and everything else. But they decided not to be too method in their approach to the work.

"To me, that is a sign of insecurity in people who don't know what they are doing," says Winters.

Instead the pair did on-the-job research to get under the skin of their characters.

Duhamel spent time with Battle Creek cops, doing ride-alongs with their undercover officers, drug enforcement team and gang unit. "There is some real stuff happening in that town," he says. "Nobody would ever suspect, because it sits right in between Detroit and Chicago, but they get a lot of riff-raff fleeing either city and hiding out there. They get a lot of crime you wouldn't expect in what seems to be a very all-American town."

Under the radar

"They get a lot of crime you wouldn't expect in what seems to be a very all-American town."

Josh Duhamel
On Battle Creek, Michigan

Winters says "the best part of the ride-alongs is actually listening to the cops talk. They have their own language, their own rhythms in the way they talk to one each other. It's really fascinating. I don't think anyone has ever really captured it, to be honest with you.

"It truly is a whole different world. I really do think the relationship Josh and I have is pretty close, especially when we're driving down the street in the Suburban. A lot of those conversations are priceless. I think (Canadian series creator-writer) David Shore has a real ear for that."

On screen, the pair investigate a series of wild cases .

"The crimes we are investigating on the show you won't see anywhere else," says Duhamel.

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CBC resurrects comedy, adds health-care series

New programming. Broadcaster unveils 10 new projects over the next year

Matt Watts stars in the CBC show Michael: Tuesdays and Thursdays, which will launch again in 2016. CONTRIBUTED

CBC is bringing back its critically acclaimed but little-seen comedy Michael: Tuesdays and Thursdays while adding an espionage thriller and health-care series to its programming slate.

On Wednesday, the public broadcaster announced 10 new projects, including the Chris Haddock espionage series The Romeo Section, the Sudz Sutherland drama Shoot the Messenger, and single-camera comedy Kim's Convenience, based on the hit play of the same name.

New for fall is the factual series Keeping Canada Alive, in which cameras across the country film a day in the life of our health-care system.

In 2016, the factual series Hello Goodbye will feature emotional stories from people at a Canadian airport, while the comedy Baroness von Sketch Show will take aim at a range of issues including hipster culture and office politics.

Meanwhile, Michael: Tuesdays & Thursdays returns with six episodes in 2016, five years after CBC cancelled it amid dismal ratings.

CBC says Season 2 picks up five years later with Michael established in his new city, and David struggling to continue his practice without his regular sessions with Michael.

Sally Catto, general manager of programming for CBC Television, explained that CBC's strategy is about "premium content" and supporting single-camera comedies "that are bold, that are distinct."

"And there's just a lot of love here for Michael: Tuesdays and Thursdays," said Catto, adding she couldn't comment on past strategy decisions that led to its cancellation. "We think it is a really, really strong property and we can't wait to get it back on the air."

Although beloved by critics, the dry comedy about a psychiatrist and his anxiety-riddled patient struggled to find an audience when it aired in 2011. Catto said that doesn't concern her.

"We knew that not every program we did was going to appeal to the broadest possible audience. So that isn't our goal and it's certainly not our goal for every program," she said.

"We know there's a loyal and dedicated audience, we love the program itself, we feel it's a great fit for us and we also believe strongly that the audience will grow."

Nevertheless, the new additions seem to come at the expense of another edgy CBC series, the dark western Strange Empire. CBC announced earlier this week it was axing the gritty show, which it touted as an example of a bold new direction in the wake of budget cuts and the loss of NHL broadcast rights.

Catto said that was an "incredibly difficult" decision and that ratings were not a factor. "There are so many brilliant programs and there's (only) so much space on the schedule and we had a number of strong projects in development," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Returning

- **Returning fall shows include:** Heartland, Murdoch Mysteries, Canada's Smartest Person, Dragons' Den, Rick Mercer Report and This Hour Has 22 Minutes.

Music. Man! Shania feels like one last big tour

Timmins, Ont., country star Shania Twain has announced a 48-date North American tour, her first such trek in 11 years.

The 49-year-old will begin June 5 in Seattle before embarking upon a slew of Canadian dates, beginning with two shows in Vancouver.

After that, Twain will wind her way towards Toronto where she will perform two nights at the Air Canada Centre on June 24 and 25. Her tour wraps in Montreal.

From there, she'll whisk through the U.S. until wrapping up Aug. 23 in Fresno, Calif.

The tour follows Twain's completion of a two-year residency at the plush Colosseum at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

"This is a celebration tour. It's party time!" Twain said in a release.

"The Rock This Country tour will have a different spirit than my past tours. It's a Shania they've never seen before. A lot of years have gone by and I've got a lot more to share."

In an interview on ABC's Good Morning America, Twain suggested this will be her final major tour.

"This is going to be a big, big tour for me because it's going to be my last. This is my last tour. So yeah, I'm going to make the most of it, let's put it that way."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Television

The Walking Dead ghost town ready for revival

A ghost town in Georgia which was used as a filming location for the popular zombie series The Walking Dead has been put up for sale on eBay.

For just $680,000 US, the successful bidder would snatch up nine buildings including retail and residential spaces, loft apartments, a pizza restaurant, pub, pharmacy and office space, some of which were featured in season three of the popular AMC drama The Walking Dead.

Former Grantville mayor and current owner Jim Sells is hoping that the town's claim to fame will help him accelerate the sale.

AFP

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Karrueche Tran dumped Chris Brown on Twitter after finding out he has a nine-month-old daughter. ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Brown's baby drama too much for girlfriend

Surprise! Embattled singer Chris Brown is a dad. TMZ reports that Brown is the father to a nine-month-old girl with a former model identified only as Nia. There's no sign of legal trouble between the parents, and sources say they're on good terms and not romantically linked. Since it doesn't involve an ambulance dispatch or a court filing, I'm honestly scratching my head as to how TMZ found out about this.

While Brown is said to be "happy about being a father," the same can't be said for his on-again, off-again girlfriend, Karrueche Tran, who took to Twitter to officially dump him following the news. "Listen. One can only take so much. The best of luck to Chris and his family," she wrote.

"No baby drama for me." Good thinking.

The business of baby names

Maybe for his next child, Chris Brown might want to consider the services of a company that helps parents come up with unique monikers, à la Blue Ivy and North West.

- A Swiss company called Erfolgswelle vows to create a brand-new first name — for US$31,000.
- CEO and owner Marc Hauser said the process works similar to trademark naming with around 100 hours devoted to its creation and research.
- "I think it's very difficult to create a really fitting name, a name that fits to your family's background, to your cultural background," Hauser said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rogen's pot proclivities push Pascal's patience

Amy Pascal must seriously be losing patience with Seth Rogen at this point. After that whole business with The Interview and the hacking and her losing her job and all, he's now inadvertently making it impossible for Pascal to move into her new office on the Sony lot.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, Pascal is set to make a home for her new Sony-financed production company in the offices previously occupied by Rogen and writing partner Evan Goldberg, only the lingering stench of marijuana is so strong, it has seeped into the flooring and is prompting a full paint job. Seriously, Seth, you've never heard of a vaporizer?

Hilton pleads guilty to assault

Conrad Hilton and Kathy Hilton in 2008 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some trouble you can't just buy your way out of. Conrad Hilton — 21-year-old hotel-chain heir and younger brother of Paris — has agreed to plead guilty to an assault charge from his infamous tirade during a flight from London to L.A. last year, and he could be looking at up to six months in prison and a $5,000 fine. Hilton's attorney, Robert Shapiro, said previously that Hilton's behaviour may have been "the effects of a sleeping pill" or some similar circumstance.

According to an FBI affidavit, Hilton acknowledged calling other passengers "peasants" and said he would have killed one flight attendant if another passenger had not calmed him during the 10-hour flight July 31. Hilton ignored instructions to keep his seatbelt on and paced in the aisle as the aircraft took off. When told to sit, he launched into a series of tirades that had some children in tears. He threatened to kill several flight attendants and a co-pilot and get them fired, the affidavit said. "I could get you all fired in five minutes," Hilton said in one of the document's quotes that didn't include an expletive.

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Gossip

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Not-so-fun facts about the common cold

Achoo! Did you know there are more than 100 viruses that cause the pesky sickness?

JACQUELINE KOVACS
For Metro

Do you feel like that annoying cold just keeps coming back? It's more likely that you are just getting new ones. According to the Mayo Clinic, there are more than 100 viruses that cause the common cold — and any combination of the accompanying runny nose, watery eyes, sneezing, coughing, sore throat and congestion.

That's just one not-so-fun fact about the common cold and flu. Read on for more.

The most common

And the winner is — the rhinovirus! It's the most common strain of cold people catch. It's to blame for your nose running like a tap. And given how versatile this virus is, you can easily catch one after another.

So much for the man cold

Guys may gripe more about their nagging coughs and congestion, but, on average, women get more colds than men. It is thought that this is because women tend to have more contact with children — who are total virus magnets — than men do.

Talk about staying power

Flu viruses can linger for up to two days on non-porous, hard surfaces and a full 12 hours on soft ones. At human body temperature, flu viruses can stay infectious for about a week. At the freezing point, they can stay infectious for more than 30 days and, below freezing, they can last indefinitely.

Your sneeze is loaded

Sneezing into a tissue or your elbow is more than just good manners — it's a major preventative action. A sneeze leaves your body at about 90 miles per hour, bringing with it virus-laden droplets that can reach people within 30 feet of you. And, yes, sneezing on someone is a very effective way of giving them your cold.

Share statistics instead of the virus. A sneeze projects virus-laden droplets within a 30-foot radius, so sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. SHUTTERSTOCK

It's in the stars

Why do we call that annual scourge "influenza?" It comes from the Italian word influentia. Back in the day, it seems people blamed the influence of the moon, stars and planets for the flu's nasty and widespread influence.

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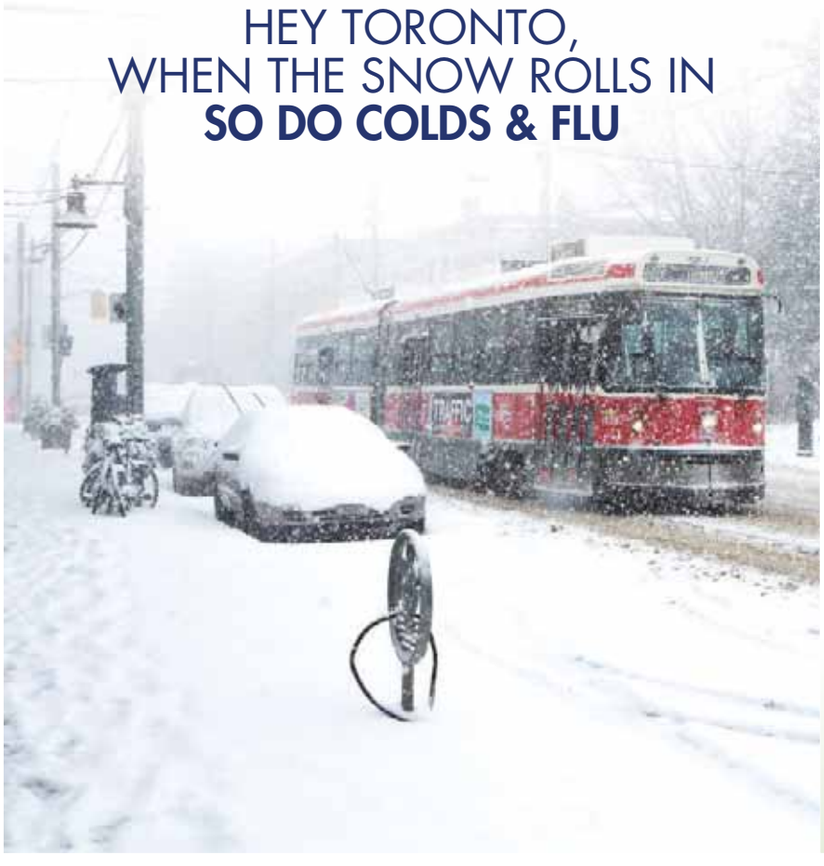

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A Bowie boom in fashion

Style. The runways are awash with references to the flamboyant glam-rock inspired fashions of the 1970s

Designers in Paris, London, New York and Milan have been sampling some of David Bowie's most iconic genderless looks of late: from jumpsuits to Lurex, fantastically wide lapels, snazzy sequins, and mohawks.

Saint Laurent head designer Hedi Slimane, a long-standing Bowie fan, launched the trend seasons ago, and then last year Raf Simons kickstarted the Bowie revival when he unveiled his Spring 2015 Haute Couture collection for Christian Dior.

The Dior runway was replete with all-over sequined onesies fit for Ziggy Stardust and outfits in psychedelic prints that would be at home on any of Bowie's arty album sleeves.

Gucci models channelled an androgynous, '70s pretty-boy look while sequined onesies were seen at Christian Dior. GETTY IMAGES AND AFP

Lyrics

"A small Jean Genie snuck off to the city. Strung out on lasers and slash-back blazers."

The Jean Genie as written by David Bowie

At the Vivienne Westwood catwalk in London last month, models sported bright Bowie-style furry mohawks, while face paint was a key beauty look at both Westwood's show and that of British designer Gareth Pugh.

At Milan Fashion Week, Alessandro Michele channelled the androgynous '70s pretty-boy look as he sent male and female models down the catwalk for his debut F/W 15-16 collection for Gucci.

Selfridges of London is launching its in-store Agender project this month (launching online on March 12), which will feature unisex clothing, a gender-less window display, and art pieces that examine the concept of gender-neutral fashion.

This week, as the fourth and final leg of ready-to-wear week arrives in Paris, followers of the star's exuberant style (and those fortunate enough to be in France) have been able to enjoy a Bowie fashion fest off the catwalk at the David Bowie Is exhibition at the cool new Philarmonie de Paris music complex. AFP

Bowie-style mohawks and face paint were key runway beauty looks at recent fashion shows in London. IAN GAVAN/GETTY IMAGES

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Cookbook of the Week

More to Quebec than Poutine

The culinary treasure that is Quebec isn't as celebrated as it should be, and Julian Armstrong is out to change that with her book Made in Quebec. Armstrong, a longtime food writer, has spent her career documenting the Quebecois food scene. The book is the result of those years and features stories of restaurateurs, farmers, artisanal cheese and bread makers, home cooks and more. Among recipes included in Made In Quebec are Spiced Pork Spread, Roasted Vegetable Quiche, Skirt Steak with Gorgonzola Sauce, Roast Beef with Gravy and Chocolate Cranberry Cookies. METRO

French methods with a Mexican soul

Dinner. Braised Lamb Shanks with Poblano Peppers and Pinto Beans combines two cultures

"Quebec French cuisine 'with a Latin accent' is the specialty of Montreal chef David Ferguson, Ontario-raised and a graduate of the Stratford Chefs School," writes Julian Armstrong in Made in Quebec.

"Faithful to French culinary techniques at his midtown bistro, Restaurant Gus, David also adds flavours learned on his cooking sojourns in Mexico and New Mexico."

This Braised Lamb Shanks with Poblano Peppers and Pinto Beans recipe perfectly embodies that philosophy.

1. Preheat the oven to 300 F (150 C).

2. Finely chop 1 of the onions. In a 4-quart (4 L) heavy, stovetop-safe casserole dish with a lid, heat 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of the oil over medium-high heat and brown lamb on all sides. Remove to a plate. Reduce heat to medium and, in the same casserole dish, sauté carrot, chopped onion, garlic, and leek just until golden, about 5 minutes.

3. Add 1/2 cup (125 ml) of the cold water to the pan and scrape up any brown bits. Return lamb to the casserole dish and add 5 cups (1.25 ml) cold water or enough to cover. Add thyme and ancho pepper. Bring mixture to a boil, then cover, transfer to the oven and roast for 1 hour and 45 minutes, until lamb is tender.

4. Remove lamb to a plate. Season the cooking liquid with salt and pepper. Discard ancho pepper. Simmer cooking liquid until it is reduced to about 3 cups (750 ml).

5. Meanwhile, cut remaining onion in half vertically, then slice finely. In a heavy frying pan, heat remaining 1 tablespoon (15 ml) oil over medium-high heat and cook onion until caramelized.

6. Return lamb to casserole dish. Add beans, tomatoes, caramelized onion, and poblano pepper. Reheat mixture and serve on deep, warmed serving plates.

Ingredients

- 2 large onions
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
- 4 lamb shanks
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 leek, white part only, chopped
- 5 1/2 cups (1.375 l) cold water
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) finely chopped fresh thyme or rosemary
- 1/2 ancho pepper, rehydrated
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 can (19 oz/540 ml) beans, preferably pinto or red kidney, drained and rinsed
- 4 Roma tomatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped, or 2 cups (500 ml) canned Italian tomatoes
- 1 poblano pepper, grilled, peeled, seeded, and cut in strips

RECIPE FROM MADE IN QUEBEC: A CULINARY JOURNEY BY JULIAN ARMSTRONG ©2014. PUBLISHED BY HARPERCOLLINS CANADA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

This recipe serves four. RYAN SZULC

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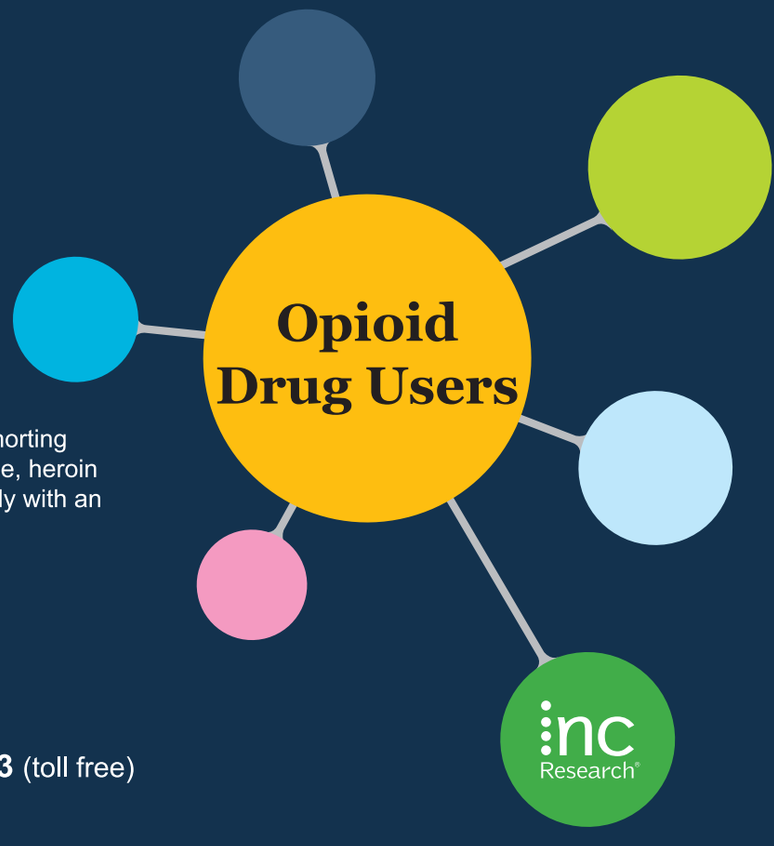

HOME

Average detached home now over $1M

Real estate. Townhomes and condos even more sought after as cost of detached houses soar

The high demand for detached single-family homes shows not sign of letting up. ALL PHOTOS: TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Home sales in February were surprisingly hot — even in the face of record-low temperatures — as sales climbed 11.3 per cent over the same period a year ago, and so did prices, with the average detached in the City of Toronto exceeding the $1 million mark.

Prices for all housing types — from condos to detached homes — were up 7.8 per cent in February across the GTA, bringing the average sales price to $596,193, according to figures released by the Toronto Real Estate Board Wednesday.

Detached homes

But detached homes in the 416 region remained in particularly high demand.

Sales were up a stunning 16.9 per cent, year over year, and prices continued to climb into the stratosphere. While the average sale price for a detached in the City of Toronto briefly touched on $1 million last April, it had quickly dipped down by the end of that month to $965,670. It stayed roughly there — below $1 million — right up until now.

But unrelenting high demand coupled with a shortage of listings — the supply of homes for sale was down 8.7 per cent in February, year over year — continues to fuel bidding wars which show no signs of letting up.

And it's still a few weeks until peak spring market.

"The strong year-over-year price growth we experienced in February points to the robust demand for ownership housing in the GTA, coupled with a constrained supply of homes for sale in some market segments, especially where low-rise home types like singles, semis and townhouses are concerned," said Jason Mercer, the real estate board's director of analysis in a statement.

Despite one of the most bitterly nasty winters in recent memory, some 6,338 houses and condos sold in February, up from 5,696 a year ago, according to TREB figures.

Top for transactions were detached homes in the 416 region, with sales up 16.9 per cent, no doubt further buoyed by the recent further drop in interest rates. Overall, detached home sales were up 13.9 per cent across the GTA.

The average sale price of a detached was up 8.9 per cent across the GTA, to an average of $782,166. But demand for the holy grail of housing — a detached house close to work and transit in the highly coveted City of Toronto — saw average sale prices average an unprecedented $1.04 million for the whole month. That compared to $694,285 in the 905 regions.

Townhouses

Townhouses — now highly sought after as the most affordable form of housing next to condos — were also in extraordinarily high demand with sales up 13.6 per cent in February over a year earlier.

Prices, however, were down seven per cent in the 416 region, to an average of $507,843. In the 905 regions, the average sale price of a townhouse stood at $433,127 last month, up 8 per cent year over year.

Condominiums

Condo sales were surprisingly strong, up 10 per cent year over year, and prices held relatively steady despite escalating supply, up 2.4 per cent across the GTA.

That brought the average price of a condo in the 416 region to $369,655 in February, down 0.9 per cent year over year, while condos in the 905 regions saw sale prices climb by almost 11 per cent, to an average sale price of $322,055, significantly narrowing the gap between buying a condo in the city versus the suburbs.

The average days on market for all housing types dropped by 7.7 per cent in February — largely reflecting continued high demand in the face of a shortage of properties for sale — from 26 days in February of 2014 to 24 days last month. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

What $1M used to buy

186 St. Leonard's Ave

- **Year sold.** 1996
- **Sold price:** $1 million
- **List price:** $1.099 million
- **Taxes:** $8,623.74 (as of 1995)
- Showcase home in the prime Bridle Path-Sunnybrook-York Mill real estate district.

137 Craighurst Ave.

- **Year sold:** 2004
- **Sold price:** $1.01 million
- **List Price:** $879,900
- **Taxes:** (had yet to be set)
- "Stunning new custom-built home" in the Lawrence Park South area.

106 Wembley Rd.

- **Year sold:** 2009
- **Sold price:** $1 million
- **List Price:** $1.099 million
- **Taxes:** $7,191.08 (as of 2008)
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The perfect place to come to your Senses

The resort-inspired Senses condominiums in Oakville. CONTRIBUTED

Meet the condo

- **What.** Senses Condominiums
- **Builder.** EmpireArchitect. Graziani + Corazza Architects
- **Designer.** Bryon Patton
- **Location.** Kerr Street and Speers Road in Oakville
- **Building.** A 19-storey tower with five-storey podium
- **Sizes.** From 346 to 1,250 sq. ft.
- **Pricing.** Starting at $179,990
- **Suites.** Studios, one bedroom, one bedroom plus den, two bedroom, two bedroom plus den
- **Occupancy.** October 2016
- **Website.** senses.empire-communities.com

The project overview

Empire Communities has announced the launch of Senses Condominiums in Oakville, the latest release of the second tower of Empire's successful Rain community. The 19-storey resort-inspired condominium is the newest phase of the master-planned community.

Location and transit

The Oakville GO Transit and Via Rail stations are within walking distance with the commute to Union Station in downtown Toronto taking no more than 45 minutes on the GO train. The transit-rich location also offers quick access to the QEW.

Building amenities

The condo features a fully-equipped exercise room with weight training and cardio area, indoor pool with lounge area and a whirlpool. There's a party room with kitchen, a private dining area, a lounge with fireplace, as well as an outdoor rooftop terrace with barbecue.

In the neighbourhood

Located in the revitalized Kerr Village, residents will experience an array of quaint shops and upscale restaurants. To the south is historic downtown Oakville. There's also the Oakville Harbour, Sixteen Mile Creek Trail and the Bronte Creek Provincial Park.

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Make your small space look bigger

Feeling cramped in your small space and need to redecorate? Here are five small-space decorating tricks you can use to make your place seem larger

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

1. Keep colours and tones similar

Decorating with all light, all medium or all dark tones creates a visual flow that allows the eye to roam, giving the sense of a larger space. Keeping every decorating element similar will make your space feel much larger. Note: this is the trick designers use to make those tiny model suites feel larger.

ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

2. Go vertical

Drapery panels, stacking art vertically on the walls, floor lamps, an étagère and even tall plants help to draw the eye upwards which is as important as guiding the eye around a room. Vittsjo Metal and Glass Étagère, $50, Ikea.com

3. Add some sheen

Reflective surfaces like shiny countertops, stainless steel appliances, glass coffee tables and glossy paint will reflect light around the room. Dana Acrylic Writing Desk, $2,000, Horchow.com

4. Allow one focal point per room

Best areas to zero in on: head of bed, bathroom mirror, television or console table in foyer. Have a boring living room? Try adding a double-duty fireplace/television stand as an attractive and useful focal point. Muskoka Durant Electric Media Mantel, $930, Lowes.ca

5. Furnishings should do double-duty

Any investment furniture piece should provide at least two services, like a console table that acts a desk, an ottoman with storage space, or a comfy dining chair that can be used as additional seating. A bed with built-in drawers helps to eliminate the need for a dresser. Universal's Spencer Storage Bed, $2,200, TheBay.com

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'Bespoke' decor brings upcycled bikes indoors

Bikes have become part of hipster culture. There are bicycle-themed dining, drinking and shopping establishments from Toronto to Vancouver and dozens of bike-friendly burgs in between. While the rides themselves are often tricked out with coloured tires, swanky seats and vintage baskets, there are also those who see more than the sum of two wheels, a frame and a seat. Designers and artists are creating furnishings and art that give bicycles a whole new way to roll

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Popping wheelies

The Bicycle Collection was created by upcycling discarded bicycle rims, pedals and frames. The result are rustic yet sophisticated designs that are instantly recognizable as repurposed. The Bicycle Screen is made from three panels that are hinged together, allowing for many configurations. DIANA PARRISH DESIGN + PHOTOGRAPHY/PHILLIPS COLLECTION/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sexy sprockets

Canadian cyclist and metal artisan Gilbert VandenHeuvel turns out all sorts of reworked bicycle art and accessories from his studio in Goderich, Ont."The sexy sprockets, curvy rims, flexible rubber and sturdy frame make for endless design possibilities," he says. Bikes are "almost begging to be reborn, reshaped into something surprising and beautiful."

THERECYCLER.CA

Filled to the rim

Cutting boards from Solo Home Design are created with bicycle rims and salvaged wood. "There's an industrial vibe in our designs, and bicycle parts are a perfect fit. Gears, tires, inner tubes, spokes, chain — we try to use it all ... the different textures add something extra to each piece, and knowing we're helping the planet is the most rewarding feeling," says Meg Leese, co-owner and designer at Solo. SOLO HOME DESIGN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Handlebar taxidermy

Designer Hilary Nagler of Santa Barbara, Calif, plays with a similar idea, making "bicycle taxidermy" by mounting handlebar "horns" on a basswood plaque. Ebonizing the handlebars gives them a rustic patina and vintage esthetic. Nagler says the pieces are a "sentimental nod to my beloved childhood Schwinn," while also tipping an artsy hat to Picasso's bull's-head motif. ROBERT REDFIELD/FLEA MARKET RX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Pretty in anything but pink

The trend that designers are calling 'the new feminine' isn't a return to an excess of florals, shabby-chic lace and other clichés of feminine decor from a decade ago. Pretty is back, but designers are using traditional florals on furniture with edgy, sleek lines to create modern mashups. So how do we pull off this new look to give rooms a beautiful, feminine touch without getting too 'girly'?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tame the rustic with tailored accents

If a client wants some shabby chic, Brian David Flynn gives it an eclectic twist. A dining room designed by Flynn gives folk art a more sophisticated spin by pairing rustic elements with clean tailored accents such as the custom drapery and a soft dove grey wall colour. BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Contrast is key. Give curves some edge

Anne Maxwell Foster and Suysel dePedro Cunningham, the designers behind the design firm Tilton Fenwick, suggest layering a feminine room with an eclectic mix of furniture and patterns.

"We love traditional-style upholstery details (like a gathered skirted chair, for example), but aren't afraid to pair it with a clean and modern side table," they said in an email.

New York-based designer Young Huh also emphasizes contrast: "When I think of feminine elements, I turn toward traditional design, such as the curvilinear shapes of Louis VI pieces, floral or other nature-inspired textiles and wallpapers, trims and passementerie, and traditional curtain and furniture making," she says. "But to make the style fresh and modern, make sure the room contains contrasting elements that are edgy, clean and contemporary."

In the navy

"Dark blue and muted pink strike a gender-neutral balance and also create a super preppy vibe."

Brian David Flynn says if your heart is set on pink, pair it with navy blue.

Life in aqua — it's fun!

This laundry room is covered in high energy aqua. Flynn suggests using bold color schemes in feminine spaces to make them fun. RUSTIC WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY/HGTV.COM/BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Not ready to give up florals?

Although an overload of floral patterns will look dated, don't avoid flowers completely if you love them.

- "Florals are a great starting point for a feminine feel" but pair them with a more modern and clean palette, say the designers at Tilton Fenwick.
- They also suggest mixing in "more modern or unexpected furniture pieces, art and accessories — a modern photograph for example — that adds a layer of interest."

Be a mix minx

"There are so many colours to choose from that add a soft, feminine spin. ... You can never go wrong with white on white, but if that's too impractical, mint green and red, lavender and white, and turquoise mixed with just about anything are excellent modern-day feminine options."

Interior designer Brian Patrick Flynn

Uncommon colour combos

Shake it up!

The Tilton Fenwick designers suggest uncommon colour pairings. "Colour combinations like olive green and turquoise, for example, feel unique and fresh rather than stuffy and dated," they say.

"It allows you to use traditional patterns in fabrics and textiles without feeling dowdy."

Favourite trick: Add black

One of Huh's favourite tricks for giving a feminine room edge is to add black (or another "masculine" colour).

"Paint some moulding black, the legs of a chair, add black trim to traditional chintz pillows and all of a sudden you've made that 'nice girl' look sexy," she says.

Scheme anew

"Colour combinations like olive green and turquoise, for example feel unique and fresh rather than stuffy and dated."

Tilton Fenwick designers

A den with a less expected feminine colour scheme of mint green and fire engine red. BRIAN PATRICK FLYNN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Home improvement

Reno awards celebrate best

BRYAN TUCKEY
President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) can be found at twitter.com/bildgta, facebook.com/bildgta, and bildblogs.ca.

It may not feel like it yet, but spring is just around the corner. That means home renovation season is closing in as well, which makes this a perfect time to celebrate the best renovations of 2014.

BILD recently released the finalists for this year's Renovation and Custom Home Awards with the winners to be unveiled at the opening of the National Home Show on March 13.

These include the Best Condominium Renovation categories, which has really grown in popularity in recent years. Alair Homes Toronto, Carick Home Improvements and Golden Bee Homes are the three companies found on the short list, and are among the growing number of renovation companies specializing in condo renovations.

More and more homeowners looking to improve the value of their older condo, as well as their quality of life, are opting for renovation. There was a significant amount of condominium projects built in the City of Toronto in the 1980s, but many of these condos are now older and in need of a fresh look.

Some of the renovation projects include opening up the space for a more modern, open-concept design. Others involve investing in a more trendy, stainless steel look. Another popular choice is switching out their outdated appliances for newer, more energy efficient ones.

Just in the GTA alone, home renovation and custom home building is a $13-billion industry that plays a key role in the economic prosperity of our region. creating close to 100,000 jobs every year. Those jobs pay out more than $5 billion in wages, which show up as purchases across the GTA.

If you are thinking about renovating your home or condominium this year, make sure you work with a professional contractor. There are plenty to choose from across the GTA. Just visit renomark.ca and use the searchable database to find a professional renovator or trade contractor in your area.

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Smart. Ikea turns tables into wireless chargers

Ikea's phone-charging furniture will be available in North America in April. IKEA

Global furniture giant Ikea announced on Sunday the launch of desks, tables and lamps that will wirelessly charge phones and other devices.

The new collection will use Qi wireless technology to charge devices that are placed on or near the furniture.

"Through research and home visits, we know that people hate cable mess. They worry about not finding the charger and running out of power," Ikea's business area manager of lighting and wireless charging, Jeanette Skjelmose, said in a statement.

The Home Spot range of desks, bedside tables and lamps will hit stores in Europe and North America in April. AFP

Legal Matters

Leaky roof leaves landlord afloat

LEGAL MATTERS
Jeffrey Cowan
home@metronews.ca

I own a condo on the top floor of a building. In early winter, the roof started leaking which caused two reactions: 1. our tenant moved out, and, 2. fairly substantial damage and mould to our unit. It is now March and the problem has not been fixed. We are wondering what our remedies are? The board of directors doesn't seem concerned and nothing is being done.

When you live in a condo, the responsibilities for certain components of the building are generally defined in the constating documents (declaration and bylaws) that will state who is responsible for problems such as leaks to the roof. Typically, this would be the responsibility of the condo corporation and any damages that resulted from a problem with the roof would also be the responsibility of the condo. You need to check the documents to see who is accountable. If it is the condo, you should be placed in a position as if the problem had not existed (i.e. you still have a tenant and you have benefited from the monthly rent).

If the condo corporation is responsible for the roof, then it would also be on the hook for its repair and any problems result from the leak. That said, you may have to pursue the condo corporation in small claims court to recover your losses but eventually, you should be successful.

Follow Jeff Cowan on Twitter @Cowan_Law or on the website cowanlaw.ca, or email him at jeff@cowanlaw.ca.

4 SPORTS

Cavs power past Raptors

Raptors centre Jonas Valanciunas fouls the Cavaliers' LeBron James at the Air Canada Centre on Wednesday night. James scored a game-high 29 points and added 14 assists in a 120-112 win for Cleveland. Valanciunas and Lou Williams led the Raptors with 26 points apiece.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stroman at ease in second go-around

MLB. 'Flashy' starting pitcher says he's more relaxed with a year in majors under his belt

With six pitches in his repertoire including a newly minted sinker, Marcus Stroman has plenty of reasons to smile.

And with a year in the major leagues under his belt, the 23-year-old right-hander is finally able to be himself in the Blue Jays clubhouse.

"Last year being a young guy coming into your first spring training, you can't really be yourself," he said. "And I'm pretty flashy, I talk a lot. This year I'm able to do that."

Stroman threw all six pitches — four-seam fastball, two-seam fastball (sinker), slider, curve ball, cutter and change-up — in his 1-2/3 innings Wednesday afternoon in a 4-1 Toronto win over the Pittsburgh Pirates on a toasty 28-degree day.

He faced seven hitters, giving up one unearned run on two hits. He also had one strikeout.

Pitcher Marcus Stroman went 11-6 in his rookie season last year.

RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

As a rookie last season, Stroman went 11-6 with a 3.65 earned-run average and 111 strikeouts in 130-2/3 innings.

"I expect him to have a big year," manager John Gibbons said before the game. "He's that good. And he's that confident."

Flashy does not really do Stroman justice.

A muscular five-foot-eight and 180 pounds, Stroman comes with a ready smile and no shortage of swagger. His current hairstyle is a complex creation of different colours, lengths and shaved designs.

Stroman says last spring training, he was so worried about making the team that it affected his performance.

"I feel a lot different, I feel much more relaxed," he said of his state of mind this spring.

"I'm relaxed, I'm motivated, I'm ready to go."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Game highlights

Dioner Navarro, Kevin Pillar, Ramon Santiago and Matt Hague drove in runs in Toronto's 4-1 win over Pittsburgh on Wednesday.

- The Jays outhit the Pirates 6-4.
- Pillar made a diving catch.
- Caleb Gindl recorded a triple in the seventh when two Pirates collided in the outfield.

MLS. Work stoppage averted with new 5-year contract

Major League Soccer and its players' union have agreed in principle to a five-year labour contract, a person familiar with the deal told The Associated Press, averting a possible strike ahead of Friday's season opener.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday because the agreement had not been announced. The deal, the culmination of talks that began last weekend, was likely to be announced later Wednesday night and would replace the contract that expired Jan. 31.

MLS's 20th season begins this weekend, with the defending champion Los Angeles Galaxy hosting Chicago in the opener. The Fire travelled to California on Wednesday for the match.

Orlando and former FIFA Player of the Year Kaka host New York City and former Spanish World Cup champion David Villa on Sunday in the debut of the two expansion teams that raise the league's total to 20.

Lowest salary

$36.5K

The minimum salary for players at the bottom of rosters is $36,500.

The league and the U.S. Soccer Federation are in the first year of eight-year broadcast agreements with ESPN, Fox and Univision Deportes.

Players were seeking free agency from MLS, which was set up as a single entity in which the league owns all players' contracts. While stars such as Seattle's Clint Dempsey earn up to nearly $7 million, half the league's players last September had salaries under $100,000, according to the union.

The players' union was seeking a rise in the minimum salary, which generally was $48,500 last year but contained a provision in which some players could be paid as low as $36,500. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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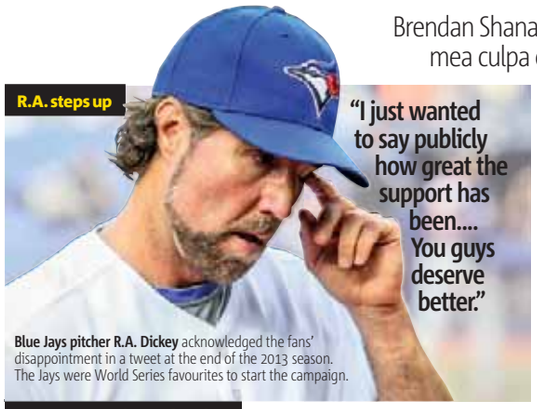
Sorry state of affairs

Brendan Shanahan's letter to Maple Leafs season-ticket holders this week marks the latest mea culpa on the Toronto sports scene. Here's a look at just a few more examples:

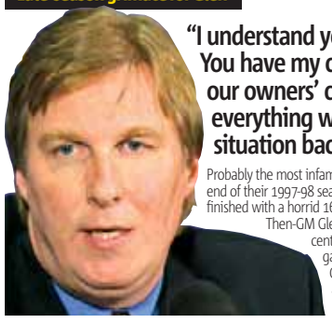
R.A. steps up



"I just wanted to say publicly how great the support has been.... You guys deserve better."

Blue Jays pitcher R.A. Dickey acknowledged the fans' disappointment in a tweet at the end of the 2013 season. The Jays were World Series favourites to start the campaign.

Late-season grimace for Glen



"I understand your sentiments. You have my commitment and our owners' commitment to do everything we can to get this situation back on track."

Probably the most infamous one involved the Raptors at the end of their 1997-98 season when the NBA team finished with a horrid 16-66 record.

Then-GM Glen Grunwald went to centre court before a season-ending game on April 19 at Maple Leafs Gardens to address the crowd and apologized to some of the 14,000 fans — many of them booing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
All photos by Torstar News Service

"We had a good first half, but we didn't deliver at the end. We have the best fans in the National Hockey League and all of pro sports, and we need to deliver more. That loyalty needs to be rewarded."

Former Leafs GM Brian Burke in the spring of 2012. After the Leafs missed the playoffs for a seventh consecutive season, the franchise also extended an apology from the top, with MLSE chairman Larry Tanenbaum saying sorry in a letter to fans.

Bernier's blunder

"I'm embarrassed.... I was nervous. I think everyone makes mistakes, and that was me that night."

This past December, Leafs goalie Jonathan Bernier mistook Nelson Mandela for an athlete during a charity event sponsored by the Raptors and GM Masai Ujiri.

Brooklyn beef

"I apologize. I used the wrong choice of words out there. This thing is really not about me. It's about the players and playoffs.... I apologize to kids out there and to the Brooklyn guys."

Raptors GM Masai Ujiri, seen here with Drake earlier this season, used an expletive while addressing a crowd at Maple Leafs Square prior to a playoff game last spring against Brooklyn — the club's first playoff game since 2008. At halftime, Ujiri apologized.

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Former Bronco Jackson believes NFL will relax their views on pot

Marijuana. Ex-Denver tight end says weed is better for players than opiate-based addictive pain pills

Former Broncos tight end Nate Jackson says he believes the NFL will have no choice but to remove marijuana from its lists of banned substances in the near future.

Speaking at a marijuana business conference, Jackson called on the league to allow medical marijuana as a means to help players deal with the physical and psychological pain and head injuries inherent to their profession. Jackson said he avoided opiate painkillers as much as he could during his six-year career from 2003-08.

Instead, he self-medicated with marijuana so that he wouldn't retire addicted to prescription drugs like so many of his contemporaries, he said.

Reason

"I feel like I exited the game with my mind intact. And I credit that to marijuana in many ways."

Ex-Denver Bronco tight end Nate Jackson

"It kept my brain clean," Jackson said Wednesday during the Cannabis Business Executives Breakfast that kicked off a three-day conference titled Sports, Meds and Money.

"I feel like I exited the game with my mind intact. And I credit that to marijuana in a lot of ways and not getting hooked on these pain pills that are recklessly distributed in the league when a guy gets an injury," Jackson said. He said he believes most NFL players use marijuana — and that the league knows this.

"Marijuana is not a problem in their lives." The real danger is that they're "smashing their skulls over and over again," he added. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Source: Manning will make a return with Denver

Peyton Manning
GETTY IMAGES

Hold that gold watch. Peyton Manning is taking one more shot at the silver trophy.

Weeks of speculation about the five-time MVP's future ended Wednesday with word that he's returning for an 18th season in the NFL and fourth in Denver. A person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press that Manning will take a $4 million pay cut, from $19 million to $15 million, but that he can make it all back through performance incentives. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because there was no official announcement of the deal.

Manning, who is still scheduled to make $19 million in 2016 in the final season of the five-year contract he signed in 2012, will take his physical and sign his revised contract Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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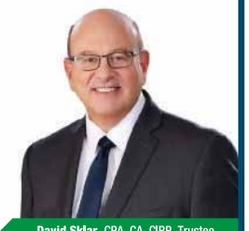

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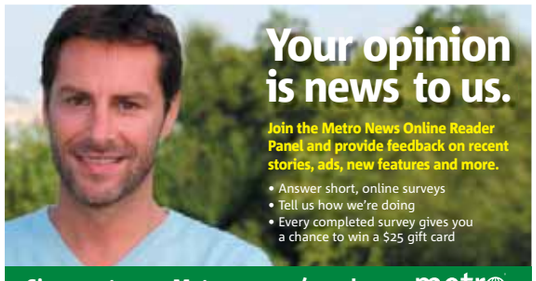

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AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Today's full moon suggests you won't be thinking straight, especially about matters related to your work and wellbeing. Don't take doubts too seriously.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Chances are you will totally and utterly disagree with the advice you are given today. Maybe it is a load of nonsense — but what if it isn't?

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
The planets warn you are expecting too much of yourself and must adjust your ambitions to a more practical level. Don't get uptight if a friend tells you something you don't want to hear.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Don't waste precious time and energy on petty arguments today because you should be channeling everything you have got in productive directions.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Today's full moon suggests you may have to cut back financially, most likely because you have bitten off more than you can chew.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Stick with the facts today. The planets warn if you embellish the truth in any way, you will be found out.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Try not to provoke any arguments or showdowns today, because while the moon is full you are unlikely to be on the winning side.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Something you have always taken for granted will be held up to the light of the full moon and shown to be less substantial than you imagined.

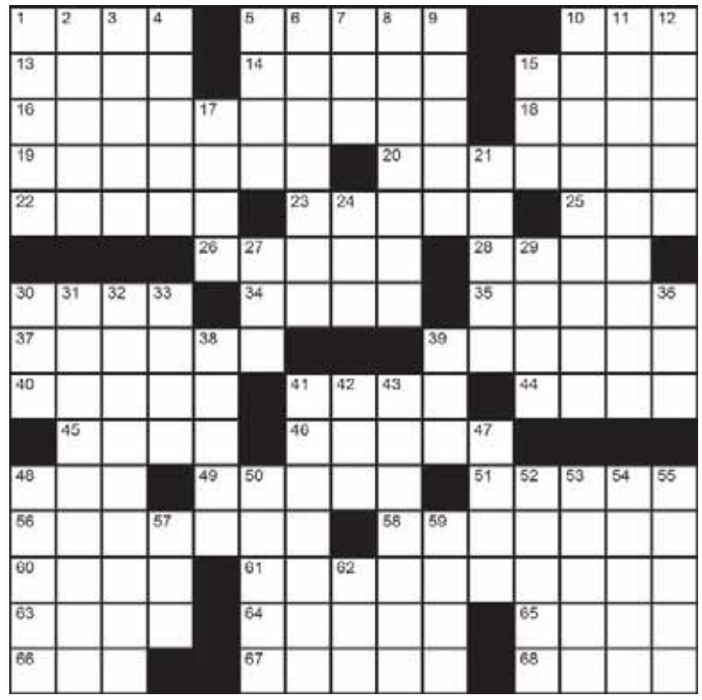
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Listen to what others have to tell you today but don't think you are obliged to do what they suggest. You are advised to hold off making a major move while the moon is full.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You will find it hard to make up your mind as to what it is you should be doing today. The planets indicate there is no need to rush.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may have some amazing ideas running through your head at the moment but don't be too eager to do anything with them.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You have big plans, but have you thought them through properly? Today's full moon in your opposite sign suggests you may have missed something of importance.

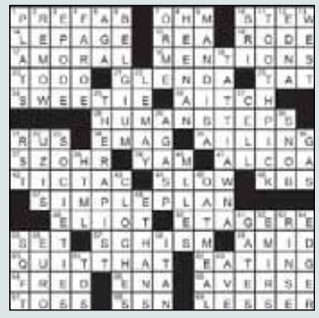
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Spell-starting sound
5. Culinary figures
10. 'The Minister of Everything': Politician/businessman Mr. Howe, et al. (b.1886 - d.1960)
13. It's what's 'proper' in grammar class
14. "__ __ en Rose" by Edith Piaf
15. Go to buy things
16. Kinross = Canadian __ __ company
18. Enamored
19. Sporting taboo, __ use
20. Pointer Sisters hit: "__ Dance"
22. Flung
23. Custom-__ homes
25. Brunch offering
26. Actor, __ William Scott
28. Footnote abbr.
30. Secretary's 'swift', shortly
34. Excited
35. More slack
37. Height measurement units
39. Non-laced running shoes fastener
40. Erin of "Happy Days"
41. "My Friend __" ('50s sitcom)
44. Upcoming annual film/music/interactive festival in Austin, Texas
45. Exhausted
46. Mike of "Shrek the Third" (2007)
48. Egyptian cobra
49. Hiked, as prices
51. Jeweller's measurement, variantly
56. Even less sincere
58. Mimic
60. Prince Charles' sport
61. Newfoundland body of water, __ Bay
63. Petals-not-pearls pieces
64. Tweety-like
65. Fails to be
66. Winding shape
67. Toronto-headquartered fashion company, __ Bella (See #6-Down for more!)
68. Spelled-out marks

Down
1. Uneasy feeling
2. County fair stall
3. Pencil case item
4. Canadian defenceman Mr. Benoit on the Buffalo Sabres
5. Old Rome's 152
6. Vegan __ (Main product by #67-Across)
7. Midianite royal
8. Caterpillar equipment dealer/support company based in Edmonton, __ (Canada)
9. Jason of "How I Met Your Mother"
10. "Boom Clap" songstress: 2 wds.
11. Meaning-well folks
12. Big name in shapewear
15. Army gig, briefly
17. Cuts the blades
21. Handy
24. 108-card game
27. '_' __ in Embrun
29. Dances for Cinderella, in Paris
30. Toothpaste brand
31. Trekking-in-white-fluff gear
32. The Parthenon is located on the what in Athens?
33. Racehorse flick, "__ Lap" (1983)
36. Theatre ticket detail
38. Tedium
39. Alternate spelling, for short
41. Make better
42. Cereal grass
43. Thorough patient examination
47. Jump rope
48. Fruit selection
50. Butter __ (Flavour for ice cream)
52. House's accessed-by-ladder spot
53. Heighten
54. Make amends
55. Rustic shelters
57. Headshakes
59. Ms. Suvari
62. Nada

Yesterday's Crossword



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Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

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Yesterday's Sudoku

2	4	7	9	1	3	6	5	8
9	3	8	2	6	5	4	7	1
1	5	6	4	7	8	2	3	9
7	6	9	1	5	2	8	4	3
3	2	5	8	4	9	7	1	6
4	8	1	7	3	6	5	9	2
5	9	4	6	2	1	3	8	7
6	1	3	5	8	7	9	2	4
8	7	2	3	9	4	1	6	5

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DEALER INVOICE PRICING + 0% LEASE OR FINANCING◊†

YOU PAY THE INVOICE PRICE!‡

On select models◊†. Dealer is reimbursed a holdback amount included in invoice price by the manufacturer for each vehicle sold*.

HWY: 6.3L/100 KM
CITY: 8.9L/100 KM▼

GLS model shown♦

2015 ACCENT 5-DOOR L MANUAL

2014 Accent "Highest Ranked Small Car in Initial Quality in the U.S.£"

LEASE FOR ONLY **$67** BI-WEEKLY

THAT'S LIKE PAYING **$34** WEEKLY

AT **0%** LEASE FOR 60 MONTHS WITH $0 DOWN◊

DEALER INVOICE PRICE OF $14,591‡ INCLUDES $636 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTSΩ, DELIVERY AND DESTINATION FEES. PLUS HST.

HWY: 6.7L/100 KM
CITY: 9.7L/100 KM▼

Limited model shown♦

2015 ELANTRA L MANUAL

2014 Elantra "Highest Ranked Compact Car in Initial Quality in the U.S.£"

LEASE FOR ONLY **$76** BI-WEEKLY

THAT'S LIKE PAYING **$38** WEEKLY

AT **0%** LEASE FOR 60 MONTHS WITH $0 DOWN◊

DEALER INVOICE PRICE OF $16,308‡ INCLUDES $719 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTSΩ, DELIVERY AND DESTINATION FEES. PLUS HST.

HWY: 6.7L/100 KM
CITY: 9.8L/100 KM▼

Sport 2.0T model shown♦

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THE ALL-NEW 2015 SONATA GL AUTO

FINANCE FOR **$70** WEEKLY

AT **0.9%** FOR 84 MONTHS AND $0 DOWN†

DEALER INVOICE PRICE OF $24,575‡ INCLUDES $1,252 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTSΩ, DELIVERY AND DESTINATION FEES. PLUS HST.

HWY: 9.3L/100 KM
CITY: 11.6L/100 KM▼

Limited model shown♦

2015 TUCSON GL FWD MANUAL

FINANCE FOR **$61** WEEKLY

AT **1.9%** FOR 96 MONTHS AND $0 DOWN†

DEALER INVOICE PRICE OF $23,419‡ INCLUDES $473 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTSΩ, DELIVERY AND DESTINATION FEES. PLUS HST.

HWY: 9.8L/100 KM
CITY: 12.9L/100 KM▼

Limited model shown♦

2015 SANTA FE SPORT 2.4L FWD

★★★★★ AWARDED THE HIGHEST GOVERNMENT CRASH SAFETY RATING* — U.S. NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

5-Star Overall Crash Safety Rating▲

LEASE FOR ONLY **$150** BI-WEEKLY

THAT'S LIKE PAYING **$75** WEEKLY

AT **1.9%** LEASE FOR 60 MONTHS WITH $0 DOWN◊

DEALER INVOICE PRICE OF $27,514‡ INCLUDES $1,313 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTSΩ, DELIVERY AND DESTINATION FEES. PLUS HST.

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5 YEAR WARRANTY

5-year/100,000 km Comprehensive Limited Warranty††
5-year/100,000 km Powertrain Warranty
5-year/100,000 km Emission Warranty

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®/™The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ‡Dealer Invoice Price of $14,591/$16,308/$24,575/$23,419/$27,514 available on all new 2015 Accent 5-Door L Manual/Elantra Sedan L Manual/Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models and includes price adjustments of $636/$719/$1,252/$473/$1,313. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,595/$1,695/$1,760/$1,795, fees, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.E. and a full tank of gas. *The customer prices are those reflected on the dealer invoice from Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. The dealer invoice price includes a holdback amount for which the dealer is subsequently reimbursed by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ΩPrice adjustments of up to $636/$719/$1,252/$473/$1,313 available on all new 2015 Accent 5-Door L Manual/Elantra Sedan L Manual/Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models. Price adjustments applied before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. ◊Leasing offer available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2015 Accent 5-Door L 6-speed Manual/Elantra L 6-speed Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD with an annual lease rate of 0%/0%/1.9%. Bi-weekly lease payment of $67/$76/$150 for a 60-month walk-away lease. Total lease obligation is $8,783/$9,840/$19,533.80. Lease offer includes Delivery and Destination of $1,595/$1,595/$1,795. Lease offer excludes registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, license fees, applicable taxes. $0 security deposit on all models. 20,000 km allowance per year applies. Additional charge of $0.12/km. †Finance offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2015 Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual with an annual finance rate of 0.9/1.9%. Weekly payments are $70/$61 for 84/96 months. $0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $905/$1,957. Finance offers include Delivery and Destination of $1,695/$1,760, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance offers exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, and license fees. Financing example: 2015 Sonata GL Auto for $24,575 at 0.9% per annum equals $70 weekly for 84 months for a total obligation of $25,446.12. $0 down payment required. Cash price is $24,575. Cost of Borrowing is $905. Example price includes Delivery and Destination of $1,795, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance example excludes registration, insurance, PPSA, license. Fees may vary by dealer. ♦Price of models shown: 2015 Accent GLS Auto/Elantra Limited/Sonata Sport 2.0T/Tucson Limited AWD/Santa Fe Sport Limited AWD are $21,277/$26,927/$32,943/$35,892/$41,577. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,595/$1,695/$1,760/$1,795, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ▼Fuel consumption for new 2015 Accent GLS (HWY 6.3L/100KM; City 8.9L/100KM); 2015 Elantra Limited(HWY 6.7L/100KM; City 9.7L/100KM); 2015 Sonata GL Auto (HWY 6.7L/100KM; City 9.8L/100KM); 2015 Tucson Limited AWD (HWY 9.3L/100KM; City 11.6L/100KM);2015 Santa Fe Sport Limited AWD (HWY 9.8L/100KM; City 12.9L/100KM); are based on Manufacturer Testing. Actual fuel efficiency may vary based on driving conditions and the addition of certain vehicle accessories. Fuel economy figures are used for comparison purposes only. ΔThe Hyundai Accent/Elantra received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among small/compact cars in the proprietary J.D. Power 2014 Initial Quality Study℠ (IQS). Study based on responses from 86,118 new-vehicle owners, measuring 239 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Propriety study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2014. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. ▲Government 5-Star Safety Ratings are part of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.SaferCar.gov). ‡†♦◊Ω*Offers available for a limited time and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions.